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ARTHUR SAMUEL PEAKE



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ARTHUR SAMUEL PEAKE

ARTHUR SAMUEL PEAKE

A MEMOIR

BY

LESLIE S. PEAKE,

M.A., B. LITT.

HODDER AND STOUGHTON

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DEDICATED TO
MY MOTHER
THROUGH WHOSE SELF-SACRIFICE
HIS WORK WAS MADE POSSIBLE

INTRODUCTION

It is a genuine privilege to be allowed to contribute a few lines to the record of Dr. Peake's life. It was only in his later years that I had the opportunity of knowing him personally, though of course his name had long been known to me as that of the man who, more perhaps than any other, combined encyclopædic and critical knowledge of the Bible with devout insight into its spiritual meaning and value. Consequently I already had a real reverence for him, when, in 1921, the beginning of my residence in Manchester made friendship possible.

Two main impressions stand out in my recollection. One is connected with the meetings of the Books Committee at Rylands Library. We met each month with few exceptions, and the Librarian at every meeting produced a long list which included on each occasion all the new publications of importance that I had heard of; then Dr. Peake, as Chairman, asked members of the Committee if they had other new books to suggest, enquiring of each member

in turn ; but almost always the other members were in the same position as myself ; very rarely one or another had a solitary suggestion to offer, but as a rule the Librarian had forestalled them all. Then Dr. Peake produced his own list of six or seven books, sometimes a dozen which had not found a place on the Librarian's list. If he had not been characterized by the most beautiful simplicity, I should have suspected collusion between the Chairman and the Librarian. And this astonishing range of acquaintance with the issue of books in all countries was by no means confined to his own subjects of special study. It was an astonishing revelation of intellectual scope and alertness.

The other main impression is that of his spiritual sympathy. The Council of Christian Congregations in Manchester was a very active body. It always represented inter-denominational activity and was often concerned with the various aspects of the problem of Reunion. Not seldom it happened that proposals were made which it was impossible for the Anglican members to accept ; sometimes these referred to action that might be taken by the governing authorities of the denominations, sometimes to action by the present company in the immediate

future. Dr. Peake had a perfectly sure appreciation of the limits which the Anglicans could not pass, and would never allow such proposals to be pressed by his own colleagues. He would rise and explain that the Anglicans could not assent, and that it was ungenerous to put them in the position of having to decline, and so he would secure the withdrawal of the proposition. I was often struck with his deeply sympathetic, even appreciative, understanding of the Anglican position. Perhaps it was not unconnected with the fact that at one time he had seriously thought of offering himself for the Anglican ministry. Certainly it is true that he not only understood the Anglican position, but definitely valued it.

This made him a powerful influence in all that made for Reunion between the Church of England and the Free Churches. He not only knew what it was for which the different parties contended; he knew why they cared. Thus he told me once that he set great store both by the Primitive Methodist permission for laymen to celebrate, and by the Anglican or Catholic principle of ministerial succession. How he proposed to reconcile these in a united Church I never heard him describe; but his

care for both made him a most influential mediator.

The better one knew him, the more one appreciated his simple and untroubled faith, his devotion to Our Lord, his almost embarrassing humility. He was a great scholar, who exerted a profound influence upon Biblical study and religious thought in England; he was an indefatigable worker, often endangering his health by his industry; but above all, he was a true Christian man.

Bishophthorpe,
York.

WILLIAM EBOR.

PREFACE

In offering to the public this labour of love the author desires to express his deep gratitude to all who have helped him by their contributions. His first thanks are due to the Archbishop of York for generously turning aside from an already over-crowded programme to write the Introduction, which has greatly enhanced the value of the book. This would have been after Dr. Peake's own heart, for he held Dr. Temple in the highest esteem. The author's thanks are also due to the numerous friends, colleagues, and relatives of Dr. Peake who have loaned their letters or who have written accounts of different aspects of Dr. Peake's work, and whose names are referred to in the book. Here special mention should be made of Miss Elsie Cann, Dr. Peake's secretary, who collected and copied out many of the letters written by Dr. Peake. The volume has been further enriched by the kind permission of the Editor of *The Methodist Leader*, and the Members of the Preachers' Friendly Society to incorporate material

from *The Methodist Leader* and *The Holborn Review*. The author would also like to acknowledge the help given to him by Dr. Wardle, who along with the author's mother and his two brothers, Arnold and Clive, was anxious that he should undertake the biography. Above all, his thanks are due to his wife, who has typed the whole of the manuscript, and who has helped in things big and small throughout the preparation of the volume. It is a real pleasure to return thanks for all these services.

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TABLE OF LEADING EVENTS

- 1865. Born at Leek, Staffordshire, November 24th.
- 1874. Entered Ludlow Grammar School.
- 1876. Entered Grammar School at Stratford-on-Avon.
- 1877. Entered King Henry VIII School, Coventry.
- 1883. Went to Oxford with a Close Scholarship from St. John's College and a School Exhibition from Coventry.
- 1884. Became a lay preacher on the Oxford Circuit.
- 1885. Took a Third Class in Classical Moderations.
- 1887. Elected Casberd Scholar at St. John's College.
Took a First Class in the Honours School of Theology.
- 1889. Elected Denyer and Johnson Scholar by Oxford University.
- 1890. Gained University Prize for Ellerton Essay.
Accepted lectureship at Mansfield College.
Elected to Theological Fellowship at Merton College.
- 1891. Spent two months at Heidelberg.
- 1892. Appointed tutor at Hartley College, Manchester.
Married Harriet Mary Sillman of Oxford on June 29th.
- 1895. Accepted lectureship at Lancashire Independent College.
- 1897. Published *A Guide to Biblical Study*.
- 1899. Spent two months in Switzerland and Italy.
Appointed one of the original members of the Council of Governors for the John Rylands Library.

TABLE OF LEADING EVENTS

- 1900. Birth of eldest son, Leslie Sillman, April 4th.
- 1902. Published *Commentary on Hebrews* in Century Bible.
Underwent first operation.
- 1903. Birth of second son, Arnold Arthur, March 16th.
Published *Commentary on Collosians* in Expositor's Greek Testament.
- 1904. Became Professor of Biblical Exegesis at Manchester University.
Appointed Dean of the Faculty of Theology.
Published *The Problem of Suffering in the Old Testament*.
Accepted lectureship at United Methodist College.
Engaged Miss Elsie Cann as private secretary.
- 1905. Birth of third son, Clive Talbot, May 20th.
Published *Commentary on Job* in the Century Bible.
Appointed Chairman of the Book Committee for the John Rylands Library.
Became a Director for the newly created *Primitive Methodist Leader*.
Edited *Inaugural Lectures* for Faculty of Theology at Manchester University.
- 1906. Received Honorary Degree of Bachelor of Divinity at Manchester University.
Published *Reform in Sunday School Teaching*.
- 1907. Received Honorary Degree of Doctor of Divinity from University of Aberdeen.
- 1908. Published *The Religion of Israel, The Christian Race, Election and Service, Faded Myths, Christianity: Its Nature and Its Truth*.
- 1909. Published *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament*.
- 1910. Published *Heroes and Martyrs of Faith*, and first volume of *Commentary on Jeremiah* in Century Bible.

TABLE OF LEADING EVENTS

- 1912. Took on extra work at Manchester University and resigned lectureships at Lancashire and United Methodist Colleges.
Removed to Freshfield near Southport.
Published second volume of *Commentary on Jeremiah*.
- 1913. Published *The Bible : Its Origin, its Significance, and its Abiding Worth*.
- 1914. Majority Celebrations at Hartley College.
- 1917. Attended Committees on Army and Religion Enquiry.
- 1918. Elected President of the Manchester Classical Association.
Became member of Methodist Union Committee.
Published *Prisoners of Hope*.
- 1919. Published *The Revelation of John*.
Edited *Peake's Commentary on the Bible*.
Appointed Editor of *The Holborn Review*.
- 1920. Returned to Manchester.
Received Honorary Degree of Doctor of Divinity at Oxford University.
- 1921. Elected Vice-Chairman of Council for John Rylands Library.
- 1922. Published *The Nature of Scripture*.
Began to attend Conferences at Lambeth.
- 1923. Published *Brotherhood in the Old Testament*.
- 1924. Elected President of the Society for Old Testament Study.
Invited to deliver Cole Lectures at Vanderbilt University in Tennessee for 1926. Subsequently forbidden by medical adviser.
- 1925. Edited *The People and the Book*.
Edited, along with Dr. Parsons, *An Outline of Christianity*.
Appointed Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Manchester University.

TABLE OF LEADING EVENTS

1926. Published *Life of Sir William Hartley*.
1927. Elected Chairman by Council of John Rylands Library.
Attended Conference at Lausanne.
1928. Became President of the National Free Church Council.
1929. Went on tour to Palestine and Egypt.
Died after operation, August 19th.

BOOKS TO WHICH DR. PEAKE CONTRIBUTED

Hastings Dictionary of the Bible.
Hastings Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels.
Hastings Dictionary of the Apostolic Church.
Hastings Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics.
Chambers' Encyclopædia.
The Universal Encyclopædia.
A New Standard Bible Dictionary.
Lux Hominum.
The Bible and the Child.
Mansfield College Essays.
Evangelical Christianity.
Germany in the Nineteenth Century.
Towards Reunion.
The Christian Faith.
The Future of Christianity.
Mumford, The Book of Job.
Evangelism : a Reinterpretation.
Our Common Faith.
Memorial Volume on Estlin Carpenter.
Revelation in The Study Bible.
The Year's Work in Classical Studies.
The Primitive Methodist Hymnal Supplement.
Sellin, Introduction to the Old Testament.
A Scripture Bibliography.

CHAPTER I
FROM CRADLE TO COLLEGE

Arthur Samuel Peake was born on November 24th, 1865, at the small town of Leek in Staffordshire. The family was of Staffordshire origin and was closely connected with Methodism since the days of its founder. His great-grandmother on his father's side was a god-daughter of the famous John Fletcher, Vicar of Madely, designated successor of John Wesley. She was a member of John Fletcher's church, and was associated with Wesley in his evangelistic work. It was customary for the Methodist preachers to stay at her home when taking services in the district. His grandfather, Benjamin Peake, was converted under the Primitive Methodists, and became a successful local preacher on the Primitive Methodist plan. For several years he conducted a night school which proved of great value to many who had grown up with scarcely the rudiments of an education. He had a knack of rhyming which he turned to account in the composition of numerous hymns, which had a certain vogue at the time in the district to which he belonged, though they did not possess the faintest trace of real poetry. He had a large family of whom two, George and Samuel, entered the Primitive Methodist ministry.

The Rev. George Peake, Arthur's uncle, was

a man of kind and gentle disposition. He broke down comparatively early in life, and Arthur could remember him only as an old-looking gentleman with grey hair, a long white beard, and a kind, benevolent face. He wrote very little, but was the author of a hymn, "I'll Sing of Jesus Crucified" now almost entirely forgotten, though the chorus is still well known throughout the Primitive Methodist Church :

" Above the rest this note shall swell,
My Jesus hath done all things well."

He was also a temperance advocate and designed two trees ; one the tree of misery and death exhibiting the roots of intemperance and the multitudinous evils which it produces, and the other the tree of health and happiness indicating the fruits in health, character, and good fortune of total abstinence. The pictures hung on the walls of many a cottage, and in their day did not a little to foster the cause of temperance reform. His daughter, Annetta, became in later years one of Arthur's firmest friends and most intimate correspondents, the relation between the two cousins being almost as close as that between brother and sister.

The Rev. Samuel Peake, Arthur's father, was born at Wheaton Ashton in Staffordshire on December 12th, 1830. He was younger than his brother, George, and was a much sterner man both in temperament and outlook. He was indeed of a moral rather than of a religious disposition. After his conversion he became a



Photo. Foulks and Hibbert

AS AN INFANT WITH HIS PARENTS AND ELDER BROTHER

deeply religious man, reverent, devout, given to prayer and meditation, concerned for his own salvation and for the salvation of others. But primarily, religion for him rested upon morality. He gave himself to God because that was his duty. He became a Christian minister because he desired above all things to be obedient to the heavenly vision. His conversion, however, kindled his morality to an intense glow, and charged it with a more thrilling emotion. Hence he found himself at home in the torrential evangelism of his earlier ministry, though he was always alert in his mistrust of mere feeling, and inflexible in applying the ethical test.

He possessed great gifts as an evangelist. He had the kind of voice that could be heard a mile away. He could preach with such vigour and emotion that sinners would creep into the corner of their pew and tremble with fear. He accepted with unquestioning conviction the old-fashioned evangelicalism so that his message was never paralysed by modern misgivings, or weakened by modern sentiment. He possessed to a remarkable degree the faculty of appeal, an appeal sometimes of tremendous force. On occasions he would rouse his congregations to such a pitch that men and women would rise from their seats en masse, and placing the forms on which they had been sitting against the wall, would assemble in the centre of the church shouting and dancing for joy because of the glad tidings that had been brought to them. He had indeed a passionate earnestness, deep pity

for the unconverted, unfaltering faith in Christ's power to save the worst, a faith abundantly verified in the conversions that he witnessed.

But he was never a mere revivalist. He laid great emphasis on the fruits of the Spirit, and as one who claimed to have received the Second Blessing was in full sympathy with the Holiness Movement, and often preached the doctrine and pressed home the privilege of Entire Sanctification. Some of the conventions for the deepening of spiritual life which he held on his circuits are still remembered for their astonishing spiritual intensity. As a preacher he was plain, practical, and direct. He was no scholar or theologian in the technical sense, but he knew the answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" The common people heard him gladly, and if he knew little theology except of the Methodist type, he had at least studied that.

His children honoured him for the integrity of his character, and for the sacrifices that he made on their behalf. He was stern and even severe in the training he gave them, but the sternness marked a real depth of affection, and was the expression of his own concern for their highest good. People say that Arthur inherited from him his high sense of honour, his lofty conception of duty, and his unflinching loyalty to what he believed to be the truth.

Arthur's mother, Rosabella Peake, was one of the saints of Primitive Methodism. She was the daughter of one John Smith, a farmer who farmed his own land at Newton, near Cwm

in Herefordshire. Her parents were old-fashioned Church of England people, and when their daughter, Rosabella, was converted under the preaching of the Primitive Methodists, she had to endure opposition from some members of her family. During his ministry at Cwm, Samuel Peake made the acquaintance of Rosabella Smith, and they were married towards the end of 1860. The mother of six children, a keen student of the Bible, and an ardent worker at the churches at which her husband ministered, she toiled beyond her strength. In the autumn of 1875 she was taken dangerously ill. The whole countryside was moved with pity, and earnest prayers for her recovery were offered in every church. But it was not to be; and on October 7th, 1875, she passed to her rest.

For his mother, Arthur always cherished the greatest affection. He never referred to her save in terms of the deepest reverence. The only time that the author ever saw him moved to tears in public was when he mentioned her name at the celebrations that took place in honour of his twenty-one years of service at Hartley College. It was perhaps the saddest regret of his life that she could not at that moment be present with him in the flesh. Those who knew her best say that he received from her not only his brilliant gifts, but also his lovable disposition. During the early years of his life she was his first teacher and constant companion.

He had four brothers and two sisters, some of whom played an important part behind the scenes.

His eldest brother, George Newton, was born at Weobly on October 20th, 1861. He was a boy of exceptionally fine character, and Arthur was exceedingly fortunate in having in him one whose life and character were both an example and an inspiration. In a letter to the Rev. H. J. Pickett, written fifty-five years later, he pays a touching tribute to his brother's memory :

"He was a fine character, very unselfish, exceptionally considerate, charitable in his judgment of others, very sympathetic, helpful to those in trouble, and all without any parade. He was very upright in his dealings, energetic, hard working, with careful attention to detail, gracious and sound in judgment. He seemed not to have a speck of envy or jealousy in his disposition. He rejoiced heartily in the success and welfare of others. He endeared himself to all. He and I were greatly attached to each other. He was my oldest link with the past."

His eldest sister, Rosabella Alice, was born at Leintwardine on December 30th, 1863. She was a child of extraordinary precocity and of very lovable character. At the age of three she was taken ill suddenly one evening and died during the night while her father was away from home. He had scarcely learned the tragic news when he was called away to bury the child of another man, and he often referred to the sharpness of the pain which he experienced in performing under such circumstances the duty of his vocation. Her mother, too, felt the loss of Alice very keenly and dedicated a little poem to her memory. Her death indeed was an

irretrievable disaster for the whole family, though probably it affected Arthur's younger sister, Emily, more seriously than anyone else, partly because she had only brothers with whom she could associate, and partly because too heavy a responsibility was thrown upon her in her early years.

In the case of a child who died when she was a little over three years old, it may seem strange to speak of knowledge or goodness in one so immature. But she had a knowledge of the Bible far beyond her years. When she and George were catechised by their father, George complained that Alice gave him no chance owing to the eagerness of her replies. She was always looked upon as being the saint of the family, and the influence that she wielded for good was an influence that was all the more potent because it could no longer be seen or felt in the literal sense. Her piety to-day would be regarded as unnatural, and even morbid, for her mind dwelt constantly on the thought of Heaven, so much so indeed that her mother's apprehensions were often aroused that she would soon lose her. The example of Alice, kept continually before his eyes, made Arthur feel, even as a boy, that knowledge and virtue were the two things to be coveted most.

His younger sister, Emily Margaret, was born at Hadnall near Shrewsbury on September 15th, 1867. She stood nearest to him in age, and during the early years of his life was his inseparable companion. He taught her her letters, and when he was grown up would laughingly say

that she was his first pupil. The opening verse of a little poem which he wrote unconsciously reveals how Emily had in one respect taken upon herself the task of mothering the motherless family :

“ When I'd been climbing o'er the crags,
And torn my trousers all to rags,
Who was it darned those tender bags ?
My sister.”

In addition to those already mentioned Arthur had three younger brothers : Albert Edwin, who died in infancy ; Ernest Vincent who died at Johannesburg at the age of twenty-five ; and William Oliver, the son of a second marriage, who along with Emily still survives him. Ernest, however, was too fond of out-door sport, and William was too young, to have any serious influence on Arthur's early years.

It is hardly necessary to say that the family was poor. A Primitive Methodist minister in those days would rarely have any private means, and neither Mr. nor Mrs. Peake had any. The salaries were very small. During the first four years when the minister was on probation he had to remain unmarried and the stipend met only the bare necessities of life. At the end of probation he generally married and was entitled to a small house very plainly furnished. Mr. Peake's salary at the time of marriage was £13 a quarter. In later years his usual salary was £22 a quarter. There was some allowance for children, and some provision for superannuation, to which the ministers themselves

contributed. From the same source a tiny income was provided for the widows of ministers. The cost of living was of course very much less than at the present day, or even than before the War, and if the manse was in the country, the garden contributed a good deal to the wants of the household. But circumstances were very straitened, and prolonged sickness made serious inroads into the slender income. No doubt it all had its moral value. The children were brought up in great simplicity with plain food, plain clothes, few toys, and no luxuries. Little help could be afforded in the house so that they were trained to make themselves useful. They had no pocket money. If money was given to them they were not allowed to spend it, but were compelled to save every penny. The application of this principle was undoubtedly carried too far, and looking back, Peake often wished that a little more wise elasticity had been displayed. His father had very little sympathy with a boy's sensitiveness, and he unfortunately had been endowed with too much, and suffered not a little shame and misery in consequence. This could not have been altogether avoided, but it might have been rendered less acute. Extravagant he could never have been in the nature of the case, but literally not to know where he could get a penny from, however much he might need it, was a source of no little unhappiness.

The strict régime under which the family was brought up may be illustrated from the following incident. A kind-hearted friend once

gave Ernest threepence for his birthday. Instead of putting it into a savings bank he boldly purchased a packet of sweets. Such needless expenditure ran contrary to all Mr. Peake's notions of thrift. Moreover, it was perhaps unfortunate that he had just purchased a new cane. Accordingly he not only whipped Ernest for being so extravagant with his money, but also gave Arthur a sound thrashing for allowing him to be so.

Religion was the dominant interest in the home, the atmosphere in which Peake was brought up being that of a rather narrow evangelicalism. Fortunately it was not Calvinistic so that life was never shadowed by doubts as to his election, or by the possibility of a fixed decree of reprobation from which he could not escape. The universality of sin was counteracted by the universality of redemption, and by the universal offer of salvation which all were free to accept. A very sharp line, however, was drawn between the converted and the unconverted, and the eternal destiny of both classes was regarded as fixed at death. The state of the lost was looked upon as inconceivably terrible, a state of hopeless and unending agony both physical and moral. This unquestioned conviction gave tremendous urgency to the evangelical appeal, proclaimed both in the open air and in the little chapels especially on Sunday nights. The Sunday night service was followed by a prayer meeting which had for one of its primary objects the appeal to the sinner to turn from his evil way and live. The appeal to fear was prominent, but also the appeal

to love and gratitude for the grace which had been displayed in redemption. Peake never had any criticism to make on the appeal to fear once the premises on which the appeal rested had been granted, for if the fate of the unconverted was so appalling, as was firmly believed, it was legitimate to bring home with all the passion the preacher could command how terrible the consequences were which through all eternity the sinner must endure. The defect lay in the premises themselves.

The inspiration of the Bible was accepted without misgiving. To question it was the mark of an infidel. Whether this would have been generally defined as verbal inspiration it is difficult to say. Peake was accustomed to the noun without the adjective. But for all practical purposes verbal inspiration was the implicit belief. The difficulties presented by the Old Testament were removed by an appeal to the differences between the two dispensations, so that what was permitted under the old dispensation might not satisfy the demand of the new. The Bible was taken as it stood, and difficulties about the Canon were not commonly recognised. "Canonical" and "inspired" would have been regarded as practically convertible terms. In this connection Peake was always interested to remember what his mother, who had a very exceptional knowledge of Scripture, once said to his father in his hearing, when he was a little boy, that she did not believe that Ecclesiastes was inspired. Anything in the nature of Biblical Criticism as we understand the term to-day

would have been repudiated. Probably its encroachment penetrated but very little into his circle. The name that would have been most familiar to him probably was that of Colenso. It was taken for granted, however, that his views could not be true, and it was assumed that the replies made to him, as to Tom Paine's *Age of Reason*, were conclusive. Similarly the conflict between Genesis and Science was thought to have been settled in favour of Genesis. The story of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was regarded as literal history and as involving the Fall of the whole of mankind in its first parents. The doctrine of the Atonement was the firm foundation on which all the evangelical effort of the Church depended. It was almost universally interpreted as substitutionary.

It must, of course, be remembered that the Primitive Methodists were in no sense peculiar in their beliefs. Their theology was in general that almost universally accepted by the orthodox Churches. They drew, however, more strongly than most of the Churches of the time, the inference that if their scheme was sound no effort ought to be spared to rescue those who through their own negligence might be irretrievably lost. It was not unnatural that where lines were drawn so sharply, and conversion was regarded as the most critical of all experiences, the sense of the difference between the old life and the new should have been very vivid. Conversion was normally catastrophic. In an anguish of penitence, and with a realisation of

his desperate condition, the sinner in an act of utter self-abandonment, cast himself completely upon the mercy of God, who for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ, had freely forgiven him. The solution of the crisis was commonly a sense of freedom and rapture. It is in no way surprising that this, when experienced for the first time, or subsequently, should often have taken a corybantic form, and it will be least of all surprising to those who are familiar with the parallel phenomena in other religious movements.

The religious life of the individual and of the Church did not centre round the Sacraments. Parents were expected to bring their infant children for Baptism, but the idea that Baptism changed an unregenerate into a regenerate nature would have been generally repudiated, and the view that unbaptised children were eternally lost would have been regarded with horror. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was observed, but not very frequently. The idea that any change occurred in the elements would have been looked upon as superstition and Popery. The view taken of the Lord's Supper would normally be that it was in its essence a commemorative rite observed in obedience to the command of Jesus. The suggestion, however, that the service was only a memorial rite would have been rejected as belittling its true value, for a memorial rite, when that to be commemorated was the death of Christ, touched the deepest springs of gratitude and love, brought vividly before the memory and the imagination the full meaning of the Divine sacrifice, searched the

conscience of the recipient to the depths, reminded him of his failures in loyalty, braced his will for a new endeavour, and inspired his faith for a fresh venture into the Unknown. A too frequent observance would have been deprecated out of fear that it might make the service too common. Its celebration in many places was undoubtedly far too rare, once a quarter being considered quite sufficient.

Something must be said here of that specifically Methodist institution, the Class Meeting. The old-fashioned Class Meeting as Peake knew it in his childhood has largely died out. It was customary for the leader of the Class to go round to each member in turn and ask him for his spiritual experience. When this had been given the leader would make such reply as seemed appropriate. Much depended on the wisdom of the leader and his competence for this kind of work. The ideal was that the individual should relate his experience and receive his counsel, encouragement, and admonition for the benefit both of himself and of his comrades, and no doubt in many cases this was realised. But the defects, as Peake remembered them, were rather serious. The experiences were of much too general a character. The individual conflicts, temptations, lapses, and triumphs, were not brought out in any concrete detail. In the nature of the case this would have been largely impossible, and in many instances quite undesirable. Not only, however, did the members stick to generalities, but these were frequently clothed in very conventional language. There

was a particular dialect of Canaan that found copious expression. Moreover, the experiences were often very stereotyped. In many cases it was possible to predict with considerable confidence precisely what each member would say. In view of these limitations it is not surprising that the old-fashioned Class Meeting has been radically transformed.

The teaching given in the Sunday Schools which Peake attended was often very crude, though it is only fair to say that his later experiences were of a different kind. In his early childhood, however, his teachers, though earnest and well-meaning, had little other equipment for their task. One incident which occurred at Bromsgrove was deeply graven on his memory. The schoolroom was under the chapel, and as the space was very limited the classes were arranged back to back. This had the great advantage that the scholar could hear what was going on in the next class. One Sunday morning the teacher in the adjoining class told a story to illustrate the perils of delay in making the all-important decision. The axiom implicit in the story was the incompatibility of worldly amusements with the Christian profession. A certain young lady was under very serious religious impressions. She was, however, very fond of dancing, and this passion kept her from yielding to her higher impulses. Nevertheless, these grew in strength, and finally she decided that she would become a Christian. But a ball was shortly to take place and she was extremely anxious to go. She determined to compromise.

She would attend the ball and then definitely break with her old life and begin the new. The story ended in this way: "She went to the ball, she returned home, she went to bed, she fell asleep, and she woke up in Hell."

At the age of five or six a child brought up in the rigid orthodoxy of the time was in no position to question the truth of the story where it passed into the Unseen, and Peake had no shadow of a doubt that the end of the story was as true as the beginning. In later life he often admired the unconscious art of the climax, and the crash with which in five monosyllables the warning of her irretrievable ruin broke upon the class.

Stories of this type were not infrequent. Some years later, when he was at Stratford-on-Avon, a local preacher told the story of a man who had been a Church member, but who had unfortunately married a godless wife. She did her best to win him back into the world and eventually succeeded. His theological convictions, however, remained unchanged, and when he lay on his death-bed he told her to draw him a bucket of water from the well. He drank it and then said, "That is the last drop of water I shall ever taste, and it's all your fault."

There were hymns in the hymn-book about Hell, but they were not often sung in the Sunday Schools, though they were frequently introduced at the Sunday night services. In the Sunday Schools hymns about Heaven were more popular. These, too, were favourite hymns with grown-up people, and as Peake looked back he was often struck with the prominence given to the idea of

rest. The people who sang these hymns worked long hours for a small wage, and they found inexpressible comfort as they joined in hymns which struck this note :

“ Though often here we're weary
There is sweet rest above.”

During his infancy Peake was very delicate and was scarcely expected to live. When Mr. Peake returned home from one of his preaching appointments and Mrs. Peake told him of the death of Alice, Mr. Peake, who was deaf, understood her to mean that it was Arthur who was dead. Alice had been in good health when he left home shortly before, whereas Arthur's death at any time would have occasioned no surprise. When he went to Ludlow Grammar School at the age of eight, Dr. Sparrow, the headmaster, said that he must be all brains. He told a friend that it quite went to his heart when he took hold of little Peake's arm. His four limbs, he said, would have made one good one.

But a frail body was no barrier to a keen mind. He possessed an excellent memory, was remarkably quick at his lessons, and was always more at home in the study than on the playing field. He used to say that the first thing he remembered was seeing his brother and sister playing battledore and shuttlecock. He could not have been more than sixteen months old as Alice died when he was that age.

In 1867 the family removed to Hadnall. Here Arthur was sent to Sunday School. At the age

of three he took part in the Sunday School Anniversary by reciting at the afternoon service a piece which his mother had written for him. A deputation of teachers came to ask that he might be permitted to repeat the performance at night. Curiously enough, though he could remember the incident itself quite well, he could never be quite certain of the sequel. His strong impression, however, was that his mother was firm and wisely sent him to bed.

In 1870 the family left Hadnall. The rule was that ministers who were changing should leave their old circuits on July 6th, and enter their new circuits on July 18th. The intervening period was all that was allowed for a holiday. That year Arthur paid a visit to some relatives at Birkenhead, and saw the sea for the first time. He could remember a visit to New Brighton and a walk upon the sands, a visit to the museum in Liverpool, where he was specially struck by the recumbent figures of ancient monarchs, and a visit to St. George's Hall.

From Birkenhead Mr. Peake went to his new circuit at Bromsgrove, twelve miles from Birmingham. Here many of the Primitive Methodists were nail makers, and Arthur found great interest in watching them at work. At that time their little forges were attached to their houses so that their work was done at home. Two incidents that happened here deserve to be mentioned.

The schoolroom, as we have seen, was situated under the chapel, which was next door to the house. The windows consisted of panes of glass which had been whitewashed. It was

decided to get rid of this eyesore and substitute corrugated glass. The old glass had to be knocked out, and Arthur volunteered his services, taking a special pleasure in making himself useful. He was not aware, however, that it had been decided to retain the glass which was below the level of the ground outside, and accordingly smashed quite a number of the panes that were to have been preserved. His father told him, quite unreasonably as he thought, that he had been a naughty boy. He vividly remembered the discomfort and apprehension with which he subsequently heard the Superintendent read out to the School the bill of costs, apprehension which was justified when he heard the item "extra panes," but, to his partial relief, without any explanation.

While at Bromsgrove, Mr. Peake offered him a prize if he knew his tables by the time he was six. He meant the multiplication table, but Arthur had learnt the money table as well. On the day before his birthday Mr. Peake examined him very thoroughly on the multiplication table, not hearing it in order, though asking every detail of it, and pencilling a tick against each answer as Arthur gave it, until the whole had been exhausted, and he had answered without a single mistake.

Mr. Peake left Bromsgrove in 1872 as he had accepted an invitation to the Church Stretton Circuit. Here the house was small and damp, and Arthur's health gave his father and mother considerable anxiety. His chilblains were particularly bad, and he had to lie on the sofa for about

three weeks on account of them. His brief stay at Stretton was specially memorable to him because it was here that his school days began. There were no facilities for education in the village, but there was a national school at Acton Scott about a mile and a half to two miles from his home. The name of the master was Williams. Arthur had been well grounded in reading, spelling, and tables by his mother. He could read moderately well when he was four, and quite well by the time he was six. A friend who lived near Stretton told him in later years that when he was physically too tired to sit any longer he would go down on his knees and put his book on the chair in order to finish it. Strangely enough, however, his mother had taught him no arithmetic. The consequence was that when he was given an addition sum to do he managed quite well till he came to a nought. This baffled him, so he turned to the little girl next to him and asked her what he was to do with it, and she instructed him to leave it out. His writing was atrocious. This was partly due to the condition of his hands which were badly chapped as well as swollen and tormented with chilblains. But partly, no doubt, it was due to the same defect which made him a complete failure at drawing. Years afterwards his position in this subject was normally two or three forms below his general status. We may perhaps connect with this his indifferent success in the study of geography. Probably the subject was badly taught, but apart from this he was never gifted with a strong sense of locality. He

possessed little talent for apprehending the lie of the land and recognising its influence upon the course of history. Maps meant much less to him than they did to most students. This he always felt was a serious drawback to him in his later work. He was eager to learn and did fairly well during his year at Acton Scott.

Mr. Peake did not possess a large library. When the absolute essentials had been met, little money remained for books, and the frequent removals entailed by the itinerant system made it necessary to restrict their number. Moreover, it would have been difficult in the small houses in which the family lived to find room for more than a very limited stock. While at Bromsgrove Arthur read a book entitled *Learning Better Than House or Lands*, the main lesson of which became firmly fixed in his mind even at that early age. Shortly afterwards he received as prizes from the Sunday School copies of *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Holy War*, the former of which he read again and again. The rigid Puritan abhorrence of fiction kept novels out of the house, and his destitution may be judged from the fact that when living away from home between the ages of eight and ten, he found *The Wide Wide World* and *Ministering Children* of absorbing interest. By a piece of good fortune *Robinson Crusoe* and *It's Never Too Late To Mend* came into his hands about the same time. He also got a great deal of pleasure out of *The Swiss Family Robinson* though a later generation would probably regard this as another proof of the Egyptian darkness in which he dwelt. *The*

Coral Island and *The Gorilla Hunters* also found their way into the home. They were lent to his mother who was rather more liberal in her attitude than his father.

Arthur found the country round Stretton very beneficial to him. The long walk to school and back again probably constituted his salvation, not only for the exercise but also because it took him out of their damp house. He scarcely ever went up the Long Mynd, but Ragleth was on the other side of the railway immediately behind the house, and it was good for him then and for years afterwards to be in the lovely scenery of Shropshire and Herefordshire. The circuit, however, did not suit Mr. Peake's health, and accordingly he accepted an invitation to return to Leintwardine, a village about nine miles from Ludlow, at the end of his first year.

It so happened that the Congregational minister at Leintwardine, Mr. Ingham, had a small school which met in the Church vestry, and to this Arthur was sent till January, 1874, when he was of age to enter the Preparatory of Ludlow Grammar School. Mr. Peake was not in a position to pay the fees required for boarders, so that Arthur and his elder brother, George, were lodged with one Susan Bishop. She did not board them, and George had the responsible task of buying their food under the strict and vigilant oversight of Mr. Peake, for whom exact accounts had to be kept and sent in for very critical scrutiny. One of the advantages, however, that the boys derived lay

in the fact that they were able to exercise some kind of choice in the diet selected. In those days little account was taken of the protests of Nature against an article of food in which great virtue was supposed to reside. One of the forms of food which Arthur hated, and which had been forced upon him at home, that was porridge. It was not simply the sliminess and the slitheriness of porridge were an abomination to him, but that he detested the taste of oatmeal in every shape and form. Nor did he doubt that Nature, who is much wiser than our old-fashioned parents, was giving her emphatic warning that porridge was an unsuitable diet for him. At Ludlow he felt it a real advantage that he could to a certain extent study his preferences even if at times they were somewhat capricious, and limited by the very strict economy that the boys were compelled to observe.

Peake's life at school contains one or two interesting episodes.

His writing was, as we have seen, inconceivably bad. The letters were ill-formed, the whole appearance of the script clumsy, ugly, and disfigured with blots. It was the custom of the headmaster, Dr. Sparrow, to have the copy books of the Preparatory forms sent up to him. He was an adept, as most schoolmasters were, in the use of the cane, and the other boys had told Peake that he caned even for a single blot. Every page of his copy book was smudged with blots, and he looked forward to the Doctor's visit with terror. When he

brought the books back and Peake's turn came he simply held the book open in front of the class and said: "This is small Peake's book." It was a great relief to be let off so lightly. He did not mind the public exhibition of his disgrace as his writing was fairly notorious.

Perhaps it was his writing that accounted for another curious fact. Peake was high up in the Preparatory and expected to be promoted when the end of the school year came. This, however, did not happen, and the reason given in his case, as in that of some others, was bad spelling. The news came to him as a surprise for his spelling was really good, a fact which was proved a little later at a Spelling Bee.

A craze for Spelling Bees was at that time sweeping over the country, and one was arranged for the Grammar School boys in the Assembly Hall at Ludlow. There were four prizes, and Peake remained in till the numbers were reduced to six. Not only had all the other Preparatory boys gone long before, but most of the other forms as well. There was a large audience, and considerable interest was displayed in the problem whether Peake would be able to hold out till he secured one of the prizes. The words naturally grew more difficult. He spelt "cygnet" correctly, but came down with "hecatomb." The word was of course entirely unfamiliar to him at that age. Another boy fell in the same round, leaving the four prize-winners in. In the next round one of these fell, so that had Peake survived a little longer, he would have shared the honours with

three of the boys at the head of the school. One of these was G. B. Matthews, the captain of the school, who later became senior wrangler. The audience gave Peake an ovation which was renewed at the end of the proceedings when the headmaster made a special reference to him, and one of the bigger boys took him up and held him so that all the audience could see him.

Some time later it was decided to hold a consolation Spelling Bee at the Grammar School itself. Peake was looking forward to this, confident that he would secure a prize, but this time he by no means covered himself with glory, for he came down at the word "apparel." Many people find the problem of single or double consonants difficult, and Peake believed that what had added to his undoing was the intrusion into his mind of the word "parallel." Anyhow, he bungled it, probably to his moral advantage, for his performance in the Assembly Hall had made him somewhat conceited. It did, however, prove that it could not have been his spelling which robbed him of his promotion from the Preparatory and he could not think of anything but the execrable character of his writing to account for the misjudgment.

His life at Ludlow brought him a great deal of happiness. When in later years he lived at home his half holidays were systematically spoilt by his father's principle that work ought to precede play. Here, however, he was able to spend his Wednesday and Saturday afternoons as a boy ought to spend them. Whitcliff, the River

Teme, and the castle grounds provided him with ideal opportunities for recreation, unhampered by the over-vigilant but well-meaning supervision exercised by his father. Here too, he formed a firm friendship with one of the boys at the Grammar School, Willie Meredith. The two bound themselves to each other by a long code of rules of the most intimate and exacting nature, each rule being calculated to aid in the work of mutual self-improvement and in the cultivation of a more Christ-like spirit. Their moral struggles and religious difficulties were fully and freely disclosed to each other for counsel and criticism. The friendship lasted for nearly forty years and was marked by a long and intimate correspondence which did not cease when Meredith went out to South Africa as a schoolmaster in 1887. Unfortunately when Meredith died over twenty years later nearly all Peake's letters to him were destroyed among others by Mrs. Meredith.

In 1876, the family, depleted by the incalculable loss of Mrs. Peake who had passed away in the autumn of the previous year, moved to Stratford-on-Avon. Here Peake was sent to the Grammar School where Shakespeare had sat three hundred years before him, and where Flight-Lieutenant Warneford, V.C. was to sit shortly after him. During his year's stay at Stratford-on-Avon, an evangelistic mission was held in the town and some who were on the circuit can still remember Peake joining in the procession through the streets singing:



Photo : R. V. Green.

AT THE AGE OF SIXTEEN

" I have no other argument,
I want no other plea,
It is enough that Jesus died,
And that he died for me."

The following year the family removed to Coventry, where Peake attended the King Henry VIII Grammar School for the next six years. His stay here was memorable because during that period he came under the influence of Mr. Charles Stringer, who was his Sunday School teacher at the Ford Street Primitive Methodist Church. He gave him his first copy of the Revised Version of the New Testament when it was published in 1881, and commissioned him to buy various volumes of the Cambridge Bible as they were issued, allowing him to read what he wished before he handed them over. He was thus able to gain, some years before he began the study of theology at Oxford, an insight into certain problems about the Bible, even though he soon passed beyond the solutions offered by such elementary works. He could remember in particular the reading of Plumtre's *Ecclesiastes* to which he owed his first acquaintance with Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyam*. He could also vividly recollect the eagerness with which he read in Farrar's Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews the argument favouring Luther's theory that the Epistle had been written by Apollos. When Mr. Stringer died some fifty years later Peake sent a wreath in memory of what he owed to him.

His school life at Coventry was not altogether of the happiest. This was because he felt

rather like a fish out of water. He could not, he tells us, in a letter to his brother, George, find a congenial companion :

"I am glad you are well and happy in your apartments and with a congenial companion ; I feel very much inclined to envy you for I have nobody to associate with who is in any way a congenial companion ; so there you see you have me on the hip, as Shakespeare says. I am doing Greek play by myself with Mr. Escott three times a week, at the rate of a hundred lines each time ; that is in addition to the other work which the Sixth kids do. Those fellows never do a Greek lesson till I have done it over to them so they can't be very congenial companions."

In spite of his loneliness, however, his school days here were remarkably successful. He took a First Class in the Cambridge Local Examinations with distinction in Greek and Latin. He won a Close Scholarship to St. John's College, consisting of a £100 a year for five years. He was also awarded an Exhibition of £55 a year for four years from his school at Coventry.

During this period Mr. Peake became morbidly anxious about his son's health. A great believer in quack remedies himself, he dosed Arthur continually with medicines both orthodox and unorthodox. Cod liver oil, Peruvian bark, Cadbury's Cocoa Essence, Nicoll's Food of Health, and a host of other medicines were eagerly pressed into service. "Laws !" writes young Arthur, "isn't it enough to frighten a fellow almost out of his senses ?"

Mr. Peake's fears, however, were not altogether groundless, for just before going up to Oxford, Arthur had a severe attack of pleurisy and inflammation of the lungs. His doctor advised him to live well, take plenty of milk and eggs, and, abomination of all abominations, dose himself regularly with cod liver oil.

CHAPTER II
THE NINE YEARS AT OXFORD



The call to service came to Peake as it comes to most people, along lines that were social, educational, and religious. It will be most convenient to consider it in turn under these three aspects.

Shortly after his arrival at Oxford Peake came into intimate association with a group of men known as "The Oxford Socialists." His sympathies in this direction caused his father much searching of heart, and in a letter, written to his parents on February 2nd, 1884, he is at pains to justify his position :

"A socialist is not necessarily an infidel. An Oxford socialist is hardly likely to be one. Murder and plunder are no more connected with socialism than noise is necessary in a religious meeting. True, many socialists are infidels, but not infidels because they are socialists, but because they are too vulgar and ignorant to know any better. An Oxford socialist is one who takes a deep interest in the welfare of the people. The Church parson of a hundred years back would not be a socialist. The more *socialistic* a religious man is, in the proper sense of the term, the more good he is likely to do, because he will look upon other men as being his brothers. I think decidedly that if Christ

had lived at this day he would have been an Oxford socialist. The way he treated the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the publicans and sinners, is a proof of this. Christ didn't recognise class distinctions, but people seem to do so now. I should call Gladstone, Bright, and Chamberlain decided socialists. So was the author of *The Bitter Cry*. We claim a right for every man to think for himself, which our opponents deny. Of course, in a proper society murder and plunder would be impossible because society protects itself. The aim of a true socialist is to set society upon a proper basis. In such a society the chances for murder and pillage would be much less than in present society. We can't make people religious by act of Parliament, but we can make a state of society in which religion would be made more attractive owing to the loss of class distinctions. Of course *property* cannot be touched. It's simply ridiculous to think such a thing. But we can make laws to raise the moral condition of the people. We can make laws to lessen drinking, and other forms of misery. We can make laws to put the people in better homes, and keep them clean; we can lessen disease and dirt a hundredfold. Till the country is in a perfect condition, and society rests on a proper basis, socialists must be at work. It's quite natural to suppose that the conservatives will try to keep the people under their thumb. It's impossible. They will rise some time or other and assert their rights. Is it not better to give them, and that peaceably, than that

they should take them by force? But before they can make use properly of their rights they must be taught. This is the province of the religious and the educated. And this is what is needed: men who shall teach the masses the broad truths of Christianity, saturate their lives with them, and then it will not seem so bad a thing, nor so terrible, for them to gain their rights, for they will know how to use them, and to use them well. If, however, men will be so blind as to think that the volcano will not burst forth at some time or other, and will not lend a hand to help to train the masses, they cannot hope in the general wreck of an uneducated revolution to escape unhurt. Our rulers would know no religion because they have never been taught, and the state of the country would be desperate indeed. But a Christian socialist is one who sees that the masses must one day have their place, and tries by all the means in his power to make them a God-fearing, religious element of society. Joseph Arch was, you know, a Methodist preacher, but that does not hinder him from being a socialist. We want them to make a right use of their power when they get it."

Peake's connection with "The Oxford Socialists" was strengthened by four events which did much to deepen his interest in social questions, and so prepare him for his life-work on its humanitarian side.

The first of these events was the reading of a book entitled *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London*,

to which reference is made in the previous letter. It was the reading of this book which determined Peake to devote his life to the slums of London, and to enter as a candidate for Holy Orders in the Church of England. His intentions are fully set out in a confidential letter to his cousin, Annetta Peake, dated April 18th, 1884. In reading the extracts from this letter it is important to remember that Peake was at the time in a very delicate state of health, and was convinced that he had not many years to live. For this reason the members of his family were opposed to his entering the Primitive Methodist ministry on account of the heavy work involved in labouring on its wide circuits, while the idea of his taking up work in the slums of London dare not even be mentioned to them. Referring to the members of his family, and to their opposition to his going into the ministry, Peake writes :

“They hardly seem to regard the matter in the same light in which I do. One would think that one’s health and strength were to be weighed against human souls. There are many reasons to induce me to take such a course. Their abject misery and utter godlessness, their immorality and pursuit of every form of vice, their ignorance and destitution, all make it necessary that some effort should be made to raise them into the condition of religious, virtuous, and healthy Christians. I will send you either in this letter, or a future one, a copy of *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London*. You will read it carefully and ponder on the startling

revelations contained in it. Then ask yourself if you are any longer unwilling to let your brother devote himself to the work. The Gospel must do these people good, and if the Lord permits me to live but five years among them, when my University life is over, will not those five years be well spent? There will be much fruit assuredly if I can but work hard enough and keep humble and full of faith. All this I tell you *confidentially*; no one of our family knows so much of my intentions as you. Please do not mention them to anyone else. In connection with this matter I tell you something else, and this still more in strict confidence.

“You may have already surmised that it was not my intention to become a Primitive Methodist minister. I intend to enter the Church of England. There are several reasons which induce me to adopt this course.”

Peake then proceeds to enumerate them:

1. In the Primitive Methodist ministry he would be compelled to lose four years in Probation. Bearing in mind the delicate state of his health, and his constant fear of an early death, this was more than he was prepared to risk in his anxiety to get to the work upon which he had set his heart.

2. As a Primitive Methodist minister he might not be able to get work in London, and even if he were fortunate enough to get a circuit in this area to begin with, the frequent removals that are characteristic of Methodism would prevent him from labouring in any

one particular sphere for any length of time.

3. He believed that his power for good generally would be greater in the Anglican than in the Primitive Methodist Church.

4. He felt that the Church of England was in greater need of converted men than the Methodists.

5. He had received an Exhibition from Coventry Grammar School on the understanding that he would enter the Church of England when his course was complete.

6. The Anglican clergyman had more freedom of action than the Methodist minister. He could work according to his own taste without being hampered by certain rules which were binding upon the Methodist minister, and which would prove irksome when it came to the kind of work that he proposed to do.

He tells Annetta that he dare not flinch from the cause. He reminds her that no man who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the Kingdom of God. He refers her to the bitter curse that was pronounced upon the shirkers in the Song of Deborah and Barak, and asks her if she would like God to curse him as He had cursed them. He bids her study Watts' hymn, "When I survey the wondrous Cross," paying particular attention to certain expressions in the last two verses, and underlining the words "my life" which he feels that God is now demanding from him.

"The author of that hymn must have been

divinely inspired. It is impossible for me to read or sing that hymn without a thrill of devotion and self-sacrifice which no other hymn that I know has such power to arouse in me. The whole hymn is good. It will, if you let it, enter into your soul, and steep it in love for the Lord Jesus. You will not then think anything too much for Him; health and strength and every other selfish consideration will be thrown to the winds. I am thankful that in some measure this has been accomplished in me, but I long to rise to the height of perfect self-devotion, to lose entirely all thoughts of self, and have my affections and whole being concentrated on the Saviour. My success would then be assured me; if I could but reach that pitch of self-annihilation, in which I should no longer be myself, but lose my own identity in Christ, swallowed up in Him."

The second event that led to a deepening of Peake's interest in social work, was the movement to give Home Rule to Ireland, led by Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal Party in 1886. Peake was a strong Home Ruler, partly because he believed in the principle of Home Rule, and partly because he looked upon Home Rule as the first and inevitable step towards Imperial Federation. His heart burned with shame when he contemplated the treatment that had been meted out to Ireland, and in a letter to his brother, George, written on April 13th, 1886, he expresses his feelings in the strongest terms :

“ Are four-fifths of a nation to be debarred from their rights for the sake of a paltry minority with no patriotism but for their own pockets, and no toleration but for their own religion? The Union was obtained by men who sold their country to a tyrannical and oppressive Prime Minister. It has been kept up and maintained by such means as would in England have long ago goaded the people to a Revolution. The Irish have been more long-suffering, but the day of reckoning has come at last. If we as a Protestant country had been governed by an Irish administration, with Mr. Biggar at its head, with a troop of servile Irish Roman Catholics, who would alone be eligible for office, to oppress us, if the name of an Englishman had been flung about by them as a by-word, and our liberties trampled in the dust, do you not think that we should have revolted? And that is how Ireland has been treated in defiance of all laws, human and divine, that had a particle of justice and uprightness in them, and that is what Mr. Gladstone proposes to alter. That Home Rule will come I firmly believe. It is better to give it in time of peace than make Ireland our enemy in time of war. And as a matter of justice it should have been given long ago. One of the points most to be regretted is that the Irish are to have no vote on Imperial legislation. But Gladstone shows that this would be well-nigh impossible under our present system. Probably it will open out the way for an Imperial Parliament in which representatives from the whole Empire will take

part. It is a noteworthy fact that Chamberlain has given up his National Councils idea, and looks towards some scheme of federation for a solution of the difficulty. This measure of Gladstone's is a step in that direction. I believe in federation, but let us give Ireland her parliament first."

The third event that did much to increase Peake's concern for social conditions was the reading of General Booth's book, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*. The volume made a great impression on him, and in a letter which he wrote to Miss Sillman on December 29th, 1890, he reveals his anxiety for suffering humanity :

"I am much struck with the book. I think the scheme is admirable. I must try and send him a subscription when I am a little richer. I do feel deeply the horrible disgrace that attaches to us as a nation for allowing such a frightful state of poverty and misery to exist. If Christianity means anything at all it means that we should say that our brothers and sisters should not live under conditions which make happiness and sobriety and virtue quite impossible. Years ago I proposed giving up my life to work in the East End. I think now that I was not meant for that work either by physical or mental constitution. But I do want very much to be preserved from any callous indifference to the welfare of my fellow-men who live in such hopeless destitution as many of them do. The scheme is based on sound commercial principles, and will

have no tendency to pauperise those who receive benefit from it. I do hope that the blots in the scheme will not so prejudice people against it that they will altogether refuse to help. Of one thing I feel sure. Indiscriminate charity will never do any good but only harm. It is systematising it, and securing that work shall be done for it, which will pay for the charity that is given. What is wanted is not that money or food should be given, but that work should be given to the unemployed. And the work should not be stone-breaking or oakum-picking, but useful interesting work, and, if possible, the work a man is best able to do. If you should care to read the book you will find it very interesting indeed, brightly written, and, I think, as interesting as a novel."

The fourth event that still further intensified Peake's concern for the poorer classes was the terrible winter that visited our country in 1890-91. The weather at this time was so cold that the citizens of Oxford were able to roast an ox on the Thames. The sufferings of the poor were so appalling that Peake was constrained to refer to them at length in a letter to Miss Sillman, dated January 7th, 1891:

"If the frost continues I fear it will mean much more terrible suffering and destitution than you or I have any conception of. I do wish something could be done. It seems dreadful sometimes to me that I should be well housed and clothed and fed while people who are far better and more deserving than I am should have to suffer all the rigour of a

severe English winter with all the loss of work that it implies, and without the alleviation of food and warmth at all adequate to their need. Really life is so sad and full of bitterness that my wonder is that people cling to it so passionately as they do. Life can hardly be worth living under the conditions to which thousands of our fellow-countrymen are subject, yet the patience of the poor, their long-suffering with oppression, is to me more wonderful still. The heroism shown by innumerable people in humble life, who never dream that their conduct is other than natural, is truly amazing. When I set myself by them I feel humbled. I do hope to do something to help. Feeling sorry is useless unless one helps them oneself. I do want each of us to feel that we are not here on earth just simply for our own selfish pleasure, but set here by God Himself to do a definite work. He is our Master ; we are His stewards. The poor are Christ's representatives. He has identified Himself everywhere with the downtrodden, the suffering, and the outcast. Inasmuch as we do good to one of these we do it to Him. We serve God best by helping our fellows. I feel intensely that privilege implies responsibility. If I am more learned, more wealthy than my neighbour, I am so for his sake and not chiefly for my own."

It is worth remembering that the above was written just three months after Peake had received his Fellowship at Merton, which carried with it dinner in hall, a beautiful suite of rooms, and the sum of £200 a year for seven

years. Peake never valued money for its own sake. He always regarded it as a trust from God to be used in the service of humanity.

But Peake's call to service also came to him along lines that were educational. During his first two years at Oxford he devoted himself to a study of the Classics. Here, however, he was not a great success, and partly through ill-health, only succeeded in getting a Third in Classical Moderations. On returning to Oxford he received the painful news that the college authorities had decided to take his scholarship from him since he had not fulfilled the college rule of taking at least a Second. This decision involved Peake in considerable financial difficulty since his father was not in a position to render him much assistance. He had, however, decided to turn his attention to Theology, and in so doing made the discovery that he had found his true vocation. In January, 1887, he succeeded in winning the Casberd Scholarship, which eased his financial situation and restored him to the rank of scholar. In June the same year, he took a First in the Honours School of Theology. In 1889 he gained the Denyer and Johnson Scholarship, the most valuable theological prize that Oxford had to offer. In 1890, in spite of keen competition, he won the Ellerton Essay prize for an essay on "The Relation of Montanism to the Doctrine and Discipline of the Catholic Church." Referring to this last event, the Rev. J. Harryman Taylor, M.A., has an interesting reminiscence in *The Holborn Review* for January, 1930 :



Photo : E. T. Shelton.

GRADUATE AT OXFORD

“The time for sending in the essay drew near and he had not written a line. Then one day he set to work. He wrote all that day and through the night, with very short intervals for refreshment, and all the day following. During the afternoon of the second day I called at his rooms. He seemed very tired and nodded to me, but it was evident that it was not a convenient time for a visitor, and I left at once. Some time during that night the essay was finished. He chose as his *nom de plume* ‘Quench not the Spirit,’ which he considered appropriate to the subject, as indeed it was. When the result was announced, ‘Quench not the Spirit’ was declared to have gained the prize.”

In the Lent term of 1890 Peake was appointed tutor at Mansfield College, Oxford, in succession to Dr. Selbie, its present Principal, who had accepted the pastorate of Highgate Church. He taught Hebrew, and lectured on Old Testament History, Old Testament Theology, and the Texts for the early Christian Fathers dealing with the Incarnation. In later years it was a constant source of amusement to him that Dr. Garvie, the present Principal of New College, who was several years older than he was, should have been one of his students.

In October the same year Peake gained his Fellowship at Merton. This, as we have already seen, carried with it dinner in hall, a beautiful suite of rooms, and the sum of £200 a year for seven years. The Fellowship

was awarded on the strength of a written examination consisting of nine papers, each paper having three hours assigned to it, the whole examination lasting for four and a half days. The appointment was a remarkable one, partly because the competition that year was particularly keen, several of the competitors being double Firsts, but more so because Peake received the exceptional honour of being the first nonconformist layman to be elected to a Theological Fellowship at Oxford. The event was celebrated by his Primitive Methodist friends at a "Congratulatory Luncheon," given at the Temperance Institute, Birmingham, on November 21st. At the time the Merton Common Room was singularly rich in its membership and included such illustrious names as A. C. Bradley, William Wallace, L. T. Hobhouse, J. Burnet, H. H. Joachim, and A. E. Taylor. As the Fellows generally took breakfast, lunch, and dinner together, many golden opportunities for social intercourse were enjoyed. Peake's duties consisted in attending the Fellows' meetings about four times a year. He had no tutorial work, as this was not a teaching fellowship.

The transition from Classics to Theology was certainly the most important event that took place in Peake's career during this period. From the purely intellectual standpoint he had made the discovery that Theology and not Classics was his true forte. This revelation received further support from the theological essays that he wrote for the different Essay

Societies connected with his College and University. Perhaps these essays did more to determine his choice of a career than anything else. After reading his essay on the Manichæans, in February, 1887, he wrote to his friend, Willie Meredith :

"It was for Theology that I was born, and I am learning to walk, and feel my feet. There are few things which give more perfect pleasure than the consciousness of increasing power."

Writing for *The Holborn Review* in January, 1927, he says :

"It so happened that all the papers I read for the Essay Society were theological. I began with Gnosticism and went on to Manichæism, then to Paulinism, and then to the thorny problem of Paul's relation to the Jewish Christians. It was curiously enough the work I did for the College Essay Society which determined my own interests much more than my proper work as a student, though naturally all these subjects fell within it. My more special interest in the Old Testament was stimulated when I came to teaching. It was the fault of the Oxford system as it existed at that time that the Old Testament work consisted of the study of set portions. It was possible for a student to go through the Honours School of Theology, and take a first class in it without having had any training in Old Testament Introduction or the History of the Religion of Israel, except the fragments he acquired in the study of his set books. Shortly after I had been through the course, the Religion of Israel

was introduced into the scheme of study, and greatly to my own benefit I had to lecture on it at Mansfield College. I came to Manchester with a deep sense of the unsatisfactory character of my own undergraduate training in Scripture and made courses in Introduction and Theology, both of the Old and New Testament, the most prominent element in my own teaching."

In due course Peake was elected to the Presidency of the St. John's Essay Society, the St. Hilary Society, and the Milton Society, and the way in which his papers became the groundwork for some of his most important contributions that were to follow in later years may be illustrated from one of his essays delivered at the St. Hilary Society and entitled "The Development of Paulinism." The summary of the paper, which is written in his own handwriting in the minute book of the Society, contains the germs of nearly every distinctive position set forth in his Rylands lecture, "The Quintessence of Paulinism," delivered nearly thirty years later.

Something must be said in this connection about the scholars under whose teaching Peake came, and who did most to influence him in the choice of a vocation from an intellectual standpoint.

During the period in which he was studying Classics the scholar who made the deepest impression upon him was Mr. T. C. Snow, tutor in Classics at St. John's College. Peake always felt that he had been too fundamentally

ignorant to appreciate much of Mr. Snow's teaching, but the thing that he prized most and remembered best was his course of lectures on the *Odyssey*. They constituted his first introduction to Criticism, and he was always glad that his first insight into critical principles had been in connection with a non-biblical text. He remembered with amusement how, having spent some time over Gladstone's *Juventus Mundi*, he retailed the results of his reading in an examination paper, which was returned to him with the caustic, but thoroughly deserved, criticism that he had been writing a good deal of nonsense on a subject of which he was entirely ignorant. But of even greater importance than Mr. Snow's lectures was the stimulus that Peake received from him through less formal talks in the Essay Society and in Mr. Snow's home. At the time the Essay Society owed a great deal to two of the College tutors, Mr. Sidney Ball and Mr. T. C. Snow. On one occasion Peake made the jesting proposal that it would be very appropriate to call it the Snowball Society. In 1886 Mr. Snow read a brilliant paper entitled "The Birth of the Nineteenth Century in England." Peake never forgot the enthusiasm with which it was received. F. S. Marvin proposed from the chair that the Society should print it for private circulation—a proposal that was heartily carried. Thirty-five years later Peake obtained the permission of the author to publish it in *The Holborn Review*, where it served as a valuable antidote for those who were inclined to look at the nineteenth century with an air

of disdain. Referring to his old tutor he says :
 " As a teacher he was fettered by an unfortunate stammer, and it was a pity to waste talents so brilliant on unappreciative pass men. His gentle manner and halting delivery were ill-fitted to impress undergraduates who despised learning in comparison with sport. But his Honours students, meeting him alone or in small classes, quickly came to recognise his exceptional gifts, and as they got to know him better, admiration deepened into reverence."—*The Holborn Review*, January, 1927.

The critical work commenced by Mr. T. C. Snow was carried a step further in 1885 by Archdeacon Farrar, who was the Bampton lecturer for that year. His subject was the Bible, and Peake, who attended his lectures regularly, derived much interest and help from them. Up till this time his attitude to the Bible and to Theology had been pretty conservative, and the lectures delivered by Farrar, though in no way extreme, constituted a gentle sloping away from the more rigid orthodoxy under which he had been brought up.

The same year Dr. Henry Drummond delivered his lectures on Science and Religion, in which he attempted to show that the same laws operated in both realms. In his first lecture he spoke on " Evolution and Religion," and in his second on " The Survival of the Fittest." The latter principle he maintained held good in Religion as well as in Science. Peake was greatly impressed by him, and especially by his illustrations, which he describes as being wonderfully fertile and

well-nigh perfect. Readers of *The Christian Race* will remember that he uses one of them in his chapter on "The Race Set Before Us."

But the five scholars who influenced Peake most were undoubtedly Cheyne, Driver, Sanday, Fairbairn and Hatch. From all of them he learned much through seeing the historical method and spirit applied to the literature of the Bible.

Peake found Cheyne the most interesting of the group in the sense that he was the most original. He was so mobile that every new book from his pen was received with a certain thrill of excitement. The work done by Driver and Sanday, though first-rate in quality, was not the kind of work that made the student sit up by giving him a dig under the fifth rib. It gathered together the contributions made by previous scholars, examined them with the scientific accuracy of the trained analyst, and then built up a careful and well-balanced synthesis from the conclusions so formed. Hence the position likely to be taken could to a great extent be divined beforehand. But with Cheyne this was not the case. Each new book was eagerly devoured to see what fresh surprise the author had in store for his reader. In later life his critical development became one of the outstanding tragedies in the history of scholarship, but his novelties had not at this time become pronounced.

In temperament Driver was definitely conservative. He belonged to the critical camp, but pitched his tent as near to the traditional camp as possible. While he registered the principal emendations suggested by Duhm and

Beer he expressed the conviction that not one in ten was either necessary or probable. In the popular mind his name is chiefly associated with that of Old Testament Criticism, but it was not here that he impressed Peake most. For him Driver was always first and foremost a great philologist. He was seen at his best in his *Hebrew Tenses*, his *Notes on Samuel*, his contributions to the Oxford Hebrew Lexicon, his philological notes in his commentaries. Here he was distinguished for exact and delicate scholarship, for thorough knowledge of the background, for adequate familiarity with the work of his predecessors, for sound and sober judgment. It was in the rarer qualities of the exegete that Peake felt that he was deficient.

"He lacked, I think, that quality of intuition which takes the interpreter into the very soul of his author, that fine and flexible sympathy which qualifies the highest type of interpreter to think the thoughts of a mind remote from his own alike in time and space, to be thrilled by its emotions, to capture for himself the glow and beauty of the expression, and cast upon the modern reader the spell by which the ancient poet or prophet entranced his listeners. And in his criticism he was not in the same category with such men as De Wette, Graf, Nöldeke, Kuenen, Wellhausen, Stade, Budde, Duhm or Cheyne."—*The Holborn Review*, April, 1920.

At the same time he recognised that Driver's conservative and judicial mind enabled him to do a work that could perhaps have been done by no other, and that it was largely through his

labours that what is known as the critical view of the Old Testament became so widely accepted among English scholars.

Peake came under the influence of Sanday both as a religious teacher and as a personal friend. He knew him for over a third of a century and received much kindness, encouragement, and appreciation from him. He admired his wide learning, his exact scholarship, and, above all, his critical balance and sagacity. Indeed it was as a critic that Sanday shone. There was poise and balance in his judgment, unhurried patience and self-restraint in the examination of his documents, a resolute determination never to be confused or side-tracked by issues that were secondary or irrelevant, a mind that shot like a rapier to the heart of a problem, an insight keener and more finely tempered than that of Lightfoot, a sympathetic imagination better able to realise the strength of his opponent's case than that of Westcott. From him more than from any other Peake caught the spirit and art of the true exegete. He taught him to approach the problems of the New Testament through the eyes of Paul. He emphasised the two main principles in the historical method of study: context and development. He showed him how to view everything as part of a larger whole. Not the word, the clause or the sentence, but the paragraph, the chapter, the book, must be the unit of exposition. Attention too, must be paid to the mind of the author, the race from which he sprang, the age in which he lived, the environment in which he was brought up,

everything indeed which might give colour and meaning to a word, or combination of words. He learned, too, the place that must be given to the principle of development in the gradual unfolding of ideas. He saw that revelation was a process in history. Here in later years he was further helped by the fact that his tutorial work embraced both Old and New Testaments. He was able to give each word and idea its true Biblical value as determined by its Hebraic and Jewish as well as by its Greek and contemporary associations.

Peake was unable to accept the attitude adopted by Sanday towards the miraculous in his later teaching. An attitude that accepted the Deity of Christ in the fullest sense and then rejected the Virgin Birth and the Physical Resurrection on the ground that they were contrary to Nature was an attitude that Peake found difficult to understand. Compared with the stupendous fact of the Incarnation they were only trivial details natural to an order that had already been recognised as supernatural. The only value in their removal lay in the fact that it dispensed with two stumbling blocks that had often stood in the path of the would-be believer.

Peake's debt to Fairbairn, who came to Oxford in the autumn of 1886, was incalculable. During Fairbairn's first year he often heard his Sunday evening lectures, and never missed an opportunity of hearing him preach. Between 1887 and 1890 he attended his lectures at Mansfield College. Fairbairn's emphasis upon the historical method, his apologetic presentation of Christianity in its

relation to the great religions of the world, his clear realisation of the possibilities open to the religious teacher in training men for the Christian ministry, his broad, and at the same time lofty, conception of the Church, of Christianity, and of life in general were among the most important ways in which Peake felt the influence of Fairbairn. At the same time he succeeded in transcending some of the limitations in Fairbairn's conception of modern theology, and in its application to questions of more recent growth, though he was always proud to call himself one of Fairbairn's pupils, and was never tired of acknowledging his debt to him. No better summary of the work that Fairbairn did has been given than in Peake's memorial article in *The Expositor*, for April, 1912 :

"He helped to redeem our Theology from its insularity and provincialism, to bring it out of its backwater into the full stream of European inquiry and speculation. He taught us to be generous to religions other than our own ; but he taught us also to prize our own as the highest gift which God had granted to man. He helped us to see on what firm and tested foundations our belief in it reposed. He unfolded before us in all its magnitude what the task of expounding it and defending it involved. He had the loftiest ideal of the Christian ministry, and counted no preparation for it too exacting ; and what he so admirably illustrated in himself, he laboured strenuously to secure for others. As one who had passed through the valley of deathly gloom and on into the sunlight, he knew how to succour

the souls haunted by spectres of negation and voices of unbelief."

Largely as the result of Fairbairn's influence Peake was for a time strongly drawn to taking up work as a minister in the Congregational Church. In a letter to his brother George, dated March 17th, 1889, he says:

"Don't mention it to anyone, not even at home just now, but I think I shall very possibly enter Mansfield with a view to the Congregational ministry. I am not at all fascinated by the idea of taking Orders in the Church of England. But I have not made any decision as yet, and should have liked to talk about it with you. I have spoken to Fairbairn, but he thinks it a matter in which a man must decide for himself. I have no doubt they would give me a scholarship, and if at the end of the time I didn't care to take a Church, I should have a good chance of a Fellowship. I think now I could beat Selbie and Bartlet who are going in for a Theological Fellowship at Mansfield this vacation, though both are good men. I daresay I may talk the matter over with father. I think that the governors at Coventry would not make hard terms about the Exhibition considering I have had, I think, a better record than any Coventry boy; and school exhibitions are given with a tacit recognition that a man's University course is a very testing and trying time, and it is impossible to bind his future convictions."

The last name that must be mentioned is that of Hatch, whose main subject was Church History, and whose work on the Concordance

to the Septuagint, which he did not live to complete, was a notable contribution to Biblical scholarship. His premature death was a great loss to the Church as a whole and to his own denomination in particular. In a letter to Miss Sillman, dated January 8th, 1891, Peake pays a fine tribute to his name, and to the names of several other scholars who had recently died :

“ His too early death was one of the saddest things I have known, a great blow to the progress of sound Theological Science. He has left no one behind him to take his place. He was a man of stupendous learning, of large and liberal mind, of splendid and well-disciplined intellect, of great originality and genuine piety. He was a great example to all of us of impartial search for truth without being bound by the prejudices of one sect or theology. Though a member of the Anglican Church he was in sympathy with all denominations that were zealous for goodness and progress. He seemed to us to be free from the bigotry which members of one community often feel towards those of another. At the same time he held his convictions with great tenacity, and defended them with conspicuous success. It is very sad to think what quite lately we have lost by death : Dr. Hatch, Bishop Lightfoot, Aubrey Moore, Browning, Delitzsch, Döllinger, Cardinal Newman, Canon Liddon, Dean Church, and many more. The call of each to us is to be up and doing and carrying on the great work at which they laboured. I feel ashamed of myself to think that at five-and-twenty I have done so little.”

But the call to service also came to Peake along lines that were religious in the sense that he began to undertake practical work of a definitely religious character. Soon after his arrival at Oxford he made the acquaintance of Mr. Crompton, the Primitive Methodist minister in charge of the Oxford Circuit. The two men were drawn to each other from the first. On the Friday Peake called at Mr. Crompton's house. On the Monday Mr. Crompton took him to see several places of interest in the city. On the Tuesday they went on the river. It was the beginning of a friendship that was to have far-reaching results. Crompton was a man of sterling character, a minister who lived in advance of his age, a prophet who was not afraid to be persecuted for his convictions. There was no one in the Primitive Methodist ministry for whom Peake came to cherish a higher admiration or a deeper affection. If he had leanings towards Anglicanism when he went up to Oxford, if he was disappointed in Primitive Methodism when he got there, as he undoubtedly was, it was largely through the influence of Mr. Crompton that he became a keen worker in the Primitive Methodist Sunday School, and a very acceptable local preacher on the Primitive Methodist plan.

Soon after his arrival at Oxford he consented to take the first class boys in the Primitive Methodist Sunday School at Pembroke Street. The following letter, dated December 7th, 1883, which he wrote to his brother George, is interesting partly for its description of a typical Primitive Methodist Sunday School nearly fifty years ago,

partly for the light that it throws upon Peake's character as a youthful reformer, and partly because it foreshadows the line of action that he was to take in his great campaign on behalf of Sunday School Reform in 1905-1906:

"I was at school the Sunday before last, and last Sunday. On the former of these two days we sang, prayed, then names were called over, then sang again, and at last teaching began. I was getting on capitally when closing time came, and we endured an address from the Sunday School Union visitor. After the usual compliments that of all the eight or ten schools he had lately visited ours was the best arranged, he went on to tell us he had noted one defect, and that was we didn't use International Lessons in our Bible Classes! That was not the pleasantest for Sunday No. 1., and he went on to show us how interesting the lesson was, and, of course, I suppose, profitable (it was the tale of the fight between Goliath and David), and most of his interesting discourse was taken up with proving, what was perfectly obvious, that David was grown up at the time of the fight. I daresay you will agree with me that St. Luke is far more fitted for promiscuous reading in a Sunday School than any accounts which might incite the already too much developed fighting instincts of the boys. We sang again, once or twice, and concluded. That's their ideal of a Sunday School.

"Last Sunday it was even worse. I went down and we sang, prayed, roll call, and sang again, and at length I discovered they had the

insane custom down there of sacrificing the first Sunday afternoon in the month, lesson and all, to a prayer meeting. I was thunderstruck. Fancy, when I had a lesson for them, to have it put aside by a prayer meeting! Well, one or two prayed, then a hymn, then Superintendent said something, and some ignorant girl recited in a flat, dull manner, at her own request, some hymn about hearing instruction young and 'twill save you from a thousand snares, etc., etc. I daresay it's not altogether unfamiliar to you. The Superintendent, who by the way is a meek and mild sort of man, and all the better perhaps in some respects for it, having commended her, asked some fellow, a local preacher, I presume, to speak to us. He came up and gave us a speech, which was remarkable for nothing but its length, notwithstanding which I happen to remember one thing that he said, viz., that he had not prepared a speech so he had nothing grand to tell us, which was perfectly true, though there was no necessity for us to be reminded of it. Well, at the end of it, for it did come to an end at last, the Superintendent gave out a hymn, and so we concluded. I should most certainly not have wasted my time by going down if I had known that such a mad custom existed. I shall set my face against it, and if it isn't altered, I shall have the first Sunday in the month free. International Lessons are all very well for teachers who don't prepare their lessons because the Teachers' Assistant is a very good crutch for them, but I shall certainly not use them.

"My class I like well. They are docile

and ignorant so we shall get on well together I hope. But I must have my own way in teaching them. It's ridiculous to have one's time cut so short by such an idiotic method of opening ; and, as it is, time is all too short. I make very great personal sacrifices because they have no reliable teacher for the first class boys, and I would do more, but I must not be hampered in my work by stupid prejudice. The boys are glad to be taught well, as it's a rare circumstance for them, and I am resolved to teach them well, and reforms must be made. The second hymn is a wicked waste of time, and the roll call might well be done by each teacher in his or her own class. But according to the usual system of teaching time is not so valuable. A quarter of an hour more means some couple of chapters more read ; but a quarter of an hour means a great deal more than that with me. My ideal would be for the boys to meet me separately. I should pray two or three minutes with them, call their names and begin, and after lesson go to the last hymn and prayer with the rest of the School. I am afraid the teachers will want some considerable education before they get to that. I must be content to advance by degrees. All things come to the man who waits bravely. The first steps will be to abolish roll call and the second hymn, then the monthly prayer meeting. Perhaps they will then be prepared to let me have what I want, and what eventually I will have."

It is worth noting that his protest did not prove in vain, and that reforms in the Pembroke

Street Sunday School were adopted shortly afterwards.

The first sermon that Peake ever preached was delivered at the little village chapel at Murcott on the Oxford Primitive Methodist Circuit on the first Sunday in March, 1884. It was a beautiful Spring day when Nature seemed to be smiling in all her loveliness upon her youthful prophet. In the afternoon he took for his text, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart ; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." He always had a leaning towards a long text round which his subject could be gathered in all its fulness, though on occasions he would follow the more modern method of taking a brief sentence that would serve as a peg for his message. He had made careful preparation for this particular sermon, and had a fairly complete outline before him of what he wanted to say. He had only been speaking for two minutes, however, when to his intense horror he came to a dead stop. He collected his faculties as quickly as he could, explained to the congregation that this was the first time that he had ever preached, and entreated its sympathy and prayers on his behalf. Having done this, the words began to come once more, and he continued speaking for another twenty minutes though not with very great fluency. Mr. Crompton, who had been with him in the pulpit and taken the earlier part of the service, told him that he had done

much better than he had anticipated, and announced to the congregation that both of them would speak at the evening service.

At night Peake took for his text, "Come ; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse." After his somewhat disheartening failure in the afternoon he decided to speak without notes, trusting to his general knowledge and to the inspiration of the moment. The miracle happened. He spoke for eighteen minutes with a fluency and a freedom that had been entirely denied to him at the afternoon service. In a very real sense he both discovered and surpassed himself. Though for the time being he continued the method of making careful notes on what he had to say, it was the striking contrast between these two experiences that eventually led him to adopt the method of extempore speech. He determined to read as widely and as deeply as he could. He would come to the service with a mind well stored in the things of God. He would then leave it to the Holy Spirit, and to the inspiration that he received from his congregation, to guide the development of his thoughts, and to suggest the phraseology that he should use. In his hands this method of preparation became a complete success. He would speak with ease for an hour at a time in faultless English and without a note to guide him. He was never at a loss for a word. Sometimes he would appear to hesitate for a moment, and, if one did not know him, one might have had the uncomfortable feeling that he was not sure of his next sentence.

But this momentary pause was not due to the fact that he was unable to find a suitable word, but that three or four synonyms had presented themselves to him, and he was debating in his mind which would be the best one for him to use. The pause did not last for more than a second, and when he was in ordinary health, and was having a good time, was not even noticeable.

As a young preacher Peake had his difficulties to face.

There were some on the Oxford Circuit who, though they liked his preaching, were jealous of his popularity and of his friendship with Mr. Crompton. A plot was formed to remove his name from the plan on the ground that the Circuit had no guarantee either that he had been converted, or that he had any official sanction to occupy a Primitive Methodist pulpit. The whole story makes very sordid reading to-day, and as it is possible that some of the relatives of those who led the opposition may still be living, the case should perhaps be passed over in silence. It is sufficient for our purpose merely to record the fact that even in his early days Peake had to endure the opposition that comes from men, and to say that an unexpected discovery enabled him to gain a gloriously diplomatic, and yet thoroughly Christian, victory over his opponents.

Then there were the difficulties that he had to overcome when it came to the actual task of preaching. He felt shy and awkward before the service commenced, though he soon began to lose his initial nervousness, and to get some

of the fire that he had originally lacked. He was convinced that he spoke rather too quickly, but found it difficult to criticise himself on this point. He was troubled because his voice seemed to be rather weak when it came to speaking in a large building, but was pleased to find that it was considerably better than he had anticipated. His articulation was so good that he could be heard with ease in any fair-sized church. He discovered that at some services he could speak with much greater ease and fluency than at others though he invariably had his best times when he dispensed with notes altogether. Two months after he had delivered his first sermon he was called upon suddenly to preach at Golden Placket. He had made no special preparation for the occasion, but tells us that he spoke with the utmost freedom for twenty-five minutes, never lacking for a word. He suffered somewhat from hoarseness, and began the bad habit of drinking water in the pulpit. After preaching at Heath Street, Crewe, during the summer of 1885, he informs us that it would have been hard to go on had it not been for the water that he drank. On another occasion he declares that he would have given anything for a drink of water with which to have washed his sticky tongue, but that none was available. In later years he succeeded in conquering this defect through the discovery that it did not really do his throat any good, and that the more he drank the more he required. He soon found that his greatest difficulty was the long prayer. He confesses in one of his letters that he prayed badly and

kept on repeating himself. He decided to conquer this weakness by making it a rule to pray regularly at the Sunday night prayer meeting. At his first attempt he did considerably better, and bit by bit practice helped to make him more efficient.

But the greatest difficulty that Peake had to master in his early days was the temptation to vanity. In a letter to his cousin, Annetta, dated April 18th, 1884, he says:

"I have lately discovered a most subtle but dangerous temptation. It is this: when I have been preaching and had a good time I feel elated, as though I had done some great thing, and the Devil makes great capital out of it. And not only that, but others come and praise me to my face. I cannot retail all that I have heard them say, but one or two instances will suffice. Our chairman at Stanton Long Tea Meeting, when I had done speaking, told father he ought to be very proud he had a son who talked so easily and nicely. He wished he could. Then Mr. Skett gets up to speak, and talks about my speech, how I had given them an epitome of Ecclesiastical History, and what an intellectual treat it was. This though very kind was certainly injudicious. But the worst part is yet to come. I sat in my seat and felt pleased and flattered. It was very sinful I know, 'but the flesh is weak.' And besides all this I am at a loss how to meet this temptation except by prayer. 'Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel.' I know well that so far from taking any glory to myself I should give it all to God, and account myself

but as an unprofitable servant. But this temptation, while one of the most dangerous to which I am subject, imperilling all communication between God and my spirit, is one of the most difficult to baffle. Help me with your advice, or cheer me with your sympathy, but, *above all*, pray that I may escape the wiles of the Devil, who seeketh to take me captive at his will. I should like to make my life useful to others, but in the very act of doing it, I find a snare."

In spite of his difficulties, however, several factors contributed to make him very popular as a young preacher.

He nearly always adopted the method of extempore speech. He himself never cared for read sermons since they deprived the speaker of his spontaneity, and prevented that contact between soul and soul that ought to be so dear to both pulpit and pew. What might be gained from the standpoint of literary excellence was, he felt, more than sacrificed from the standpoint of freedom, earnestness, and simplicity. He liked to talk to his congregation as a man would talk to his friend. "You would never think of writing out what you are going to say in ordinary conversation," he would remark, "then why write it out when you are going to speak in public? Steep your mind in your subject, and then leave the rest to God and the congregation." He believed that preparation should be general rather than specific. For him the secret of all good speaking lay in a mind that was well-stored and well-disciplined. The preacher should be able to draw upon his resources in the same

way that a man might draw water from the ocean.

Another factor that contributed to his popularity was his originality. In preaching he preferred to discover his message for himself, and did not greatly care for the idea of delivering doctrines that were second-hand. One of the sermons that gave him most pleasure was taken from the text, "For the death that he died, he died unto sin once, but the life that he liveth, he liveth unto God. So reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus." When the average Methodist preacher dealt with a text of that type he would think that he had exhausted the significance of Christ's death when he had described it as an atonement for sin—the one and only ground on which God could forgive the sinner. Through his reading of the Pauline Epistles, however, Peake came to see that Paul regarded the resurrection of Jesus as being quite as important as His crucifixion, and in his preaching at this time he made it one of the central points in his presentation of truth. The message he claims was one that you might not hear from the pulpit from one year's end to another. It gave to his preaching a sense of freshness that was eagerly welcomed by the more thoughtful members of his congregation who were weary of being bathed in the blood of Jesus Sunday after Sunday.

A further element that made for his popularity was his simplicity. The only eloquence that his sermons ever possessed was the eloquence that came from simple and unadorned speech. His main object, he would say, was to make

himself understood. If there was one thing that he hated in the pulpit more than anything else it was ignorant learning paraded for its own sake. In a letter to his brother, George, dated July 4th, 1885, he speaks out strongly on this point:

“Dr. Antliff has grasped the true idea of preaching, that the preacher is not in the pulpit to proclaim to the admiring, or it may be disgusted, throng that he is learned inasmuch as he knows the Greek alphabet and the first declension of Latin nouns, but rather to proclaim how existing relations between God and man may be changed or bettered, and make us forget the preacher in what the preacher says. Some of our people will almost idolise a man if he can add to his fluent spouting a word of Greek here or a phrase of Latin there, and the less they understand him the greater they think he is. A man is not learned in their eyes if they can understand every word he says. I am afraid our preachers, the younger men specially, are great sinners in this respect. But if they learn more every day they will at last, we may hope, become capable of expressing great ideas in pure English and not in a hybrid language conspicuous chiefly for length of words and awkwardness of style, with here and there a word from some foreign language pronounced badly and expounded worse. It is a matter on which I feel strongly. One of the safeguards of religion in the pew is simplicity and directness in the pulpit; and that it was which lent power to the old Methodists, and again to the Primitive Methodists. But the foolishness of preaching

is not much believed in nowadays. You remember that at Athens St. Paul preached a somewhat philosophical sermon, with but little result, but wherever he preached the pure Gospel in plain and simple words results followed. Please preserve this letter. I have nowhere else recorded my abhorrence of the frog-aping-the-ox style in the pulpit except here, and I may want it for reference some time."

But the element that contributed most to his popularity as a preacher was the fact that his message was always strongly Christo-centric. The climax to his preaching was always to be found in the person of Jesus. If he preached from the Old Testament prophets it was to show how they had prepared the way for the coming Messiah. If he dealt with a passage from the Epistles it was to demonstrate how the life of the writer had been changed and enriched through his contact with the Son of man. He used the Old Testament as the divine prelude to the New. While he always insisted upon the necessity of knowing both books as thoroughly as possible he never forgot that the culmination to all his preaching was to be sought in the Founder of Christianity. At the very beginning of his career as a preacher he laid this principle down in black and white in a letter to his cousin, Annetta :

"I think I might sum up all my creed in that one word Christ and all that is good in my own religious experience. I don't care to get beyond that because as St. Paul has told us, and as many have proved it true, Christ is 'all in all.' Our preaching in the future will have to be the

preaching of Christ, and not the preaching of pet doctrines. That is, I shall not preach Sanctification, but Christ made Sanctification to the believer. 'Jesus Christ and Him crucified' *must be* the theme of our ministry if it is to be of success. We must not enter into fine-spun arguments about this or that point of belief; but we must show Christ to the people, or they will go to Hell. What is known as doctrinal preaching is intolerable while the Church is worldly and selfish and sinners are perishing. It is one of the points on which I feel very strongly."

Time softened his conception of the future life, but it never did anything to water down his Christology. Whatever interpretation a man might put on the debated question of punishment in the Hereafter it did nothing to alter his need of a personal Saviour here.

Peake's work as a preacher gave further confirmation to his desire to devote his life to the service of the Christian ministry, and in the summer of 1889 he wrote to his friend, Willie Meredith:

"It is nobler to lay the foundations in the dark than to place a fine spire on your building; I should like to have something to do with laying the foundation of men's belief and character."

The following paragraphs, dealing more particularly with the lighter side of Peake's life at Oxford, have been written by the Rev. E. R. Buckley, Rector of Colchester, who went up to Oxford in 1886, and who became one of Peake's most intimate college friends:

"In a college which on the one hand was rather fast and on the other rather High Church, Peake was something of an unusual phenomenon. His dress was not fashionable though he was always neat. He always wore a short black coat and waistcoat, dark grey trousers, a turn down collar, and dark tie. To this he added a blue ribbon in his buttonhole, for he was a staunch teetotaller, and Jaeger boots. His black bowler hat always looked a size or two too big which made him appear rather top-heavy.

"My first clear remembrance of him is that one Sunday night after hall, about 7.30 p.m., towards the end of my first term, he came up to my rooms, where about a dozen freshmen, several of them rather of the rowdy kind, were assembled. I was a little anxious about how he would mix with them as I think he only knew one of them besides myself. I need have had no anxiety. He was the life and soul of the party. One of them, H. Y. Nutt, who had been a medical student and a trooper in the Cape Mounted Rifles before coming to college, began to tell very tall yarns, but every time Nutt told a yarn Peake capped it with one better, and so briskly did he keep the ball rolling that the party did not break up till five minutes to twelve, when Peake, who was living in lodgings and had to be out of college before twelve, left.

"That evening illustrates his position in college very well, despite his drawbacks, for to be badly off, unfashionably dressed, a nonconformist, and a teetotaller, were serious drawbacks in such a college as St. John's in those days. His wit,

his unfailing good temper, his courtesy and personal charm, made him one of the most popular men in college. The verdict of my dozen friends that Sunday night was unanimous. They all said, 'What a good chap he is; we didn't think he was a bit like that.'

"Some time in 1887 I joined the St. Hilary Essay Society (an inter-collegiate theological society) of which Peake was a member, and from that time onwards saw him constantly, going for walks with him, going to his rooms and he coming to mine. His speeches at the St. Hilary were always interesting and illuminating, and many a tussle did he have with the High Church members of the Society. He was always good as chairman of the various College Societies. The quickness and aptness of his repartee were astonishing, and his most crushing retorts were always made in a gentle voice and with a winning smile.

"Member: Sir, can we have a photograph of the Society?

"Peake: Sir, I am afraid you will only succeed in obtaining a negative.

"On another occasion at the St. Hilary Essay Society a man called Gresham had read two papers: one on 'Christian Socialism,' another on 'Christian Secularism.' We were discussing subjects for the ensuing term. 'Mr. Gresham no doubt,' said Peake, 'will give us a paper on Christian Atheism.'

"After taking his degree he remained in Oxford and made a living by coaching. When after taking my degree in 1889 I started to read

Theology he insisted on coaching me for love for two years, though he must have had a hard struggle to live, for it was not till a year or more later that he finally got on his feet by winning in quick succession the Denyer and Johnson Scholarship, the Ellerton Essay, and a Fellowship at Merton.

"He was no good at games. I don't think he ever rowed. I once played a game of lawn tennis with him—only one set. I never repeated the experiment; perhaps he did not either.

"He had a passion for 'Penny Dreadfuls.' At the time he was working very hard for the Denyer and Johnson Scholarship he read one every night. I remember going with him to a dirty little stationer in St. Clements to buy them. He would buy half a dozen at a time—usually Red Indian or pirate stories.

"It was in my company, and I think at my instigation, that he paid his first visit to the theatre. J. L. Toole was touring in a play called, 'The Don.' Miss Eva Moore was playing the leading lady (Dora), and at the end of the play after Toole had come before the curtain and made a speech, there were loud calls for Dora. I can still vividly recall Peake standing beside me on a bench in the pit, rather flushed, very excited, and shouting 'Dora,' at the top of his voice. Many years after (about 1920) when I was passing through Manchester, and spent an afternoon with him, I asked him whether he still went to the theatre. 'No,' he said, 'I have had to sacrifice it to the Higher Criticism.' He explained that as some more conservative members

of his connexion looked rather askance at him for championing Old Testament Criticism, he did not wish to give them a handle to say that this Higher Criticism leads to play-going and suchlike evil ways.

"In these rather scattered reminiscences I have touched chiefly on the lighter side—the side of him I perhaps saw more of than his colleagues at Mansfield such as Dr. Bartlet and Dr. Selbie. But I should like to mention a great debt I owe to Peake. I had been brought up in a narrow High Church school of thought. After I had been a year or two at Oxford my mind became very unsettled on religious matters, and it was Peake's sympathy, tact, and wise counsels that kept me from drifting into agnosticism."

On June 29th, 1892, Peake was married to Miss H. M. Sillman of Oxford in the Parish Church at Cowley St. John's. His marriage was important, apart from any domestic considerations, because through it he came to understand more fully than he might otherwise have done the ways and methods of the Church of England, and in later years this had its influence when he attended the Conferences at Lambeth on the question of Reunion. His marriage did not revive his youthful desire to take Orders in the Church of England, but it did lead to a more personal interest in the denomination that claimed the allegiance of his wife, and mainly as a concession to her wishes he always conducted family prayers from the Church of England Prayer Book. She in turn frequently attended the Primitive Methodist Church along with her

husband and children though she always remained an Anglican at heart. When many years later Peake's second son, Arnold, became engaged to a Roman Catholic girl it was the hope of both Dr. and Mrs. Peake that the two would enter the Church of England as Arnold had always shown leanings towards the faith of his mother. When, however, it became evident that nothing would prevent Arnold from becoming a Romanist it did not make the least difference to the happy relation between father and son, though at first Peake felt Arnold's decision very keenly. The greatness of his character was perhaps never more clearly revealed than in his subsequent actions. He attended the wedding at which Nuptial Mass was celebrated, and welcomed the young wife into the family circle as one of his own children.

CHAPTER III
THE TUTOR AT HARTLEY COLLEGE

Peake's main contribution to Primitive Methodism centres round the name of Hartley College, where he laboured for thirty-seven years, and no account of his life would be complete which did not pay full recognition to this part of his work. Much of the story has already been told by him in his *Life of Sir William Hartley* and we cannot do better than follow the outline that he has provided, inserting where necessary any additional material that may be of interest.

For many years after its birth the Primitive Methodist Church paid very little attention to the education of its Ministry. At a time when people believed that the unsaved were doomed to everlasting torment, both physical and mental, the all-important matter was to get people saved rather than educated. The first duty of the Church was to rescue a sodden and a brutal England from the wrath to come. Under such conditions education was felt to be a hindrance rather than a help, since while the Church was engaged in study, millions that might otherwise have been saved were being hurled to a doom too terrible for words. The fields were white unto the harvest, and it was vital that every labourer should be sent into action as rapidly as possible. Hence the time allotted to education was curtailed to the barest minimum.

The rapid growth in the number of converts, however, made it necessary that some sort of training should be given to them and to their children. As the Church came to consist more and more of those who were born rather than brought into it, the education of its membership became every year more imperative. Hence while evangelism was still the ruling passion movements of an educational nature started to grow up. Preachers began to meet together in small groups for the purpose of mutual improvement. A course of study, followed by an annual examination, was arranged for each minister during the first four years of his probation. Colleges for the training of ministers were opened first at Sunderland and later at Manchester. The college at Sunderland was gradually abandoned while the college at Manchester became the tiny nucleus from which Hartley College eventually sprang. Its growth was due in a great measure to its first Principal, the Rev. James Macpherson. For a long time, however, it was not regarded as necessary for a man to pass through college before he entered the ministry, though as the years passed by, the tendency for him to do so became more usual.

There was indeed a great deal of apathy with regard to the whole subject, especially in the ranks of the laity. There was a strong conviction that the older ministers had done exceedingly well without being educated, and a shrewd suspicion that the younger ministers might lose their passion for evangelism if they became intellectual. Multitudes were convinced

that college was positively dangerous, not because it was tainted with heresy, but because it might exercise a cooling effect on the burning zeal of the young revivalist. The college at Manchester was strictly orthodox. Its first Principals, Mr. Macpherson and Dr. Wood, were rigidly so.

Such was the situation at Manchester when Peake was a young graduate at Oxford. The story of his introduction to the College and of the mental struggle through which he passed in making the choice of his life, can best be told in his own words :

"In May, 1891, Mr. and Mrs. Hartley were taking a driving tour, accompanied by Miss C. Hartley, who later became Mayor of Southport, and the Rev. F. N. Shimmin. They stayed for a few days in Oxford, and my friend, Mr. J. Harryman Taylor, who was in training for the Primitive Methodist ministry at Mansfield College, brought them round to my rooms at Merton College on the Saturday evening. They lunched with me on the Monday. It happened that I had at this time been thinking a good deal about the training which was being given at the Manchester College. I was profoundly dissatisfied with the situation. The length of the course, one year, was quite inadequate, the curriculum was antiquated and reactionary. I spoke about the matter to my guests with freedom. Mr. Hartley himself had helped the College, but had no special interest in it and had, in fact, when sending a contribution to Mr. Macpherson, intimated that this was the last that he might expect from him. Mr. Hartley was much

interested as I expounded my ideas on the vital necessity of ministerial training and on the kind of training which should be given. It was, of course, quite natural that this should be on my mind since, after attending Dr. Fairbairn's lectures for three years with the greatest profit, I had accepted his invitation to join the teaching staff of Mansfield College. I was accordingly painfully sensitive to the defectiveness of the training for the ministry in my own Church. Beyond this I think there was nothing in my mind. I was very happily settled in Oxford. I had my Fellowship at Merton and my lectureship at Mansfield. I had planned my chosen line of study and my future literary work for some time ahead. But I believe that Mr. Hartley's mind at once moved forward to plan the development which actually followed. But of this I did not learn till later. Soon after he communicated with Mr. Taylor on the matter, and in this way I learnt that he was considering the question whether I could be induced to leave Oxford for Manchester. I was naturally much exercised over the suggestion. In nearly every way the proposal was unattractive. My roots were very deep in Oxford as I had been there for eight years. My work and the conditions in which it was done were thoroughly congenial. I had many intimate and valued friendships. On the other hand, I recognized that the opportunity of serving my own Church was a great one, though I was too ignorant of the situation to realize how momentous the decision might be. My mind moved gradually in the direction of acceptance,

should the request come to me. I knew that Mr. Hartley, without mentioning my name, I believe, had suggested the new policy to the College Committee and the attention of the Conference was called to it in its Report."—*The Life of Sir William Hartley*, p. 133, seq.

Meanwhile Peake consulted Dr. Fairbairn, Sir William Robertson Nicoll, and the members of his family with regard to the choice that lay before him.

Fairbairn was anxious to keep him in Oxford, but felt that it was Peake's duty to answer the call of his Connexion. On June 3rd he wrote to him to this effect :

"I have read your letter with deep sympathy, and certainly appreciate your motives and all you would surrender. For many reasons I wish it were in my power to set before you a permanent career here worthy of your deserts. It would be a great personal pleasure to me to be able to help you in connexion with Mansfield and the prospects of Theology in Oxford. But my own feeling must be made strictly subordinate to your sense of duty. And I feel what a great opportunity may come, nay, has come to you in your Connexion. It seems to me as if you had been specially raised up and trained for the very work that is most in need of being done for it. And you are in many ways the only person that can do the work. You may lift up their idea of the ministry, of the Church, may open their minds while in no way cooling their piety, and may attain a position and influence any bishop might envy. It says much for your people that

they have proved themselves able to appreciate this opportunity, and the promise such appreciation gives is one of the happiest elements in the situation. I hardly at this moment see how we can do without you ; yet I no less feel the possibilities of a career which such an appointment would open. Possibly your Connexion might come to see that your work could be done here ; that for a few men you could do better in Oxford than in Manchester ; but quite as possibly you would need to do some service in the old Institute before any new enterprise could be proposed with any chance of success. What is before my mind is this : were they to appoint and maintain you here as resident tutor, sending only the picked men who could graduate, or had graduated, then these men could be taken in as T——has been, to be educated in Mansfield, while you would be at once their tutor and a member of our staff. I am sure our people would do all in their power to make some such arrangement possible.”—Quoted from Selbie’s *Life of Fairbairn*, p. 244.

On June 12th Peake went to stay with Sir Robertson Nicoll, who was anxious that he should contribute an article to *The Expositor*, and that he should stay the night with him on his way to the Primitive Methodist Conference which was to be held at Northampton. During a long walk over Hampstead Heath, Peake explained to him that he might be leaving Oxford to serve his own Church in its College at Manchester. In *The Holborn Review* for January 1926, Peake refers to this visit, and to Nicoll’s

attitude with regard to his going to Manchester :

"He was quite sympathetic with this; but when I went on to say that Fairbairn looked forward to the possibility of the best Primitive Methodist students being sent to Mansfield and of my return to Oxford to be their tutor and a member of the Mansfield staff, he demurred. His feeling was that every denomination had its own ethos, and that this would be endangered if the Primitive Methodist students were trained in a Congregational College. I had no special sympathy with this; but when I had entered on my work at Manchester it gradually became clear to me that my personal duty was to remain in our own College and train the students there, rather than try to realise the wish which the Principal of Mansfield had so generously expressed and which would in many ways have been extraordinarily attractive to myself."

The members of Peake's family were opposed to his leaving Oxford, partly on grounds of health and partly because they felt that he was sacrificing a good career at Oxford for a very uncertain venture at Manchester. His father in particular was afraid that his son would become so absorbed in college affairs that he would have no time for research, or for writing books that would leave their mark upon religious thought. Two letters, written by Peake to his father, have been preserved. They are not only historic in character, but are also an intimate revelation of that intense devotion to his Church that marked all Peake's actions.

The first was written from Brobury Court,

near Hereford, and is dated June 24th, 1891 :

“ You will have seen from my article in *The British Weekly* that I think something should be done in our Connexion for the better education of the ministry. I am quite convinced that unless something is done in this direction the Connexion will fail to advance. Our people have failed to keep pace with the advance of the nation in education and in general culture. My mind has been much exercised on the disgraceful state of the Connexion in this particular, and on the means of remedying it. I think it is the main problem before us at present, as it supplies us with the starting point from which we must proceed to solve our other difficulties. Others are feeling this too, and a scheme is on foot for revolutionizing the Theological Institute. The idea is that the students should remain for at least two years, if possible three, one of which is to count in the latter case as a year of probation. Also that a graduate should be appointed as tutor with a free hand in the tuition without interference from the Principal. Mr. Hartley has promised two hundred a year for five years if this scheme can be adopted. Of course, this raised the question at once as to my own position and responsibility towards it. I feel that the Connexion should have the advantage of what prestige and position I may have, and also of my educational privileges. In fact, I have been driven to the conclusion, which as a matter of duty I feel bound to accept, that if the Connexion wishes me to take the position, and will adopt a scheme which will guarantee me a reasonable

prospect of success in the work, I shall do so. Of course, it will mean considerable sacrifice. I don't think anyone but myself knows what it will mean to me to leave Oxford. But that counts with me as nothing if I see my duty clear, and I think I have never seen it clearer than in this case. I have reason to believe that it will make a very considerable difference to the position of the Institute, and the financial support given to it. I am told that it would restore confidence in the Connexion, and give it a status it has not had before. My wish in the matter is to do what would be best for the Connexion and the country at large, and I think that is the sphere in which I can do it.

"Dr. Fairbairn, with whom I have communicated, is very much distressed at the idea of my going, and would like to offer me a position worthy of my merits. But he says his wishes must be strictly subordinated to my sense of duty, and he thinks my duty is to go. He says it seems to him that I have been specially raised up and trained for the work, and am in many ways the only one who could do it. I don't feel that I am doing anything specially noble in going, though some have told me so, because when a thing becomes a matter of duty it ceases to be a matter of choice.

"Of course, nothing is settled at present, but Mr. Hartley has sent me a telegram saying 'Conference has decided that a Committee meet you personally to talk over College Course, entrance examination, and your probable engagement.'

"I think you will see and sympathise with my position. If I go it will not be because I wish to go, but because it is my plain duty. It may still come to nothing, but for the sake of the Connexion I do hope the opportunity will not be neglected. If I went I should wish it to be in 1892, in a year's time."

The second letter was written from Heidelberg, and is dated August 5th, 1891:

"With respect to Manchester I don't know that I have much to add. Of course, the matter has been very long thought about, and for some time before it seemed at all likely to come to anything I had thought a great deal about the Institute. I don't feel that I have any right to consult my interests in the matter; it is simply a question of duty. The only question to be decided is whether it is my duty to go. It is clear that I have nothing much to gain by going, and that it will be a great trouble to me to leave Oxford. That being so, all my prejudices were naturally against my going, and if I come to the conclusion that I should go it will be in spite of my feelings and wishes to the contrary. Just now the Connexion is in a very critical condition. It is neither one thing nor the other. It is passing through a period of transition. I think that the time has come for a step forward, and I feel that matters are just in that stage where I can materially help the Connexion.

"The training of the ministry is perhaps the most important work that can be done, and very essential to our future prosperity. As matters are at present, the training that is given

is most inadequate. So much so that the Institute has never commanded the confidence of our people, for the truth is that it really does not deserve it. Several who know the opinion of the Connexion think that there can be no doubt if I went that confidence would be restored, and the College properly supported. Besides, Mr. Hartley's offer is on condition of adequate provision being made for tuition by a graduate of a British University.

"Of course, I should have nothing on my hands except the tutorial work. The idea is that the Principal should keep to his department and that I should have a free hand in mine. Much of the work would not require elaborate preparation and I am inclined to think that I should be able to use a good deal of time for my own work. I am hoping, too, that if I go the work I do will have a very beneficial influence on me in more ways than one. There is no idea of my doing anything there except teaching."

Peake was introduced to the Conference at Northampton, and on his return from Heidelberg, where he spent two months of his summer vacation, met the Committee appointed by the Conference. Negotiations were carried forward, and at the Norwich Conference of the following year a public meeting was held to advocate the claims of ministerial education. Dr. Fairbairn, Dr. Wood, and Peake were the speakers, while the chair was taken by Mr. Hartley. The meeting was an immense success, and the following morning Peake was, without any dissent, appointed tutor at the Primitive Methodist College with a

free hand to plan his own curriculum and to teach on his own lines. Referring to the event he says :

“Looking back to that action across the intervening three and thirty years I pay a sincere and grateful tribute to the generous confidence which it implied. But its intrinsic significance went much deeper than any personal element in the situation. It meant that, for the first time, the official training of the ministry in the Primitive Methodist Church was in contact with the modern spirit and outlook. That it fell to me to be the pioneer in this respect was more or less accidental ; the essential thing was that whether through one channel or another the new light should be suffered to shine.”—*The Life of Sir William Hartley*, p. 141.

Though the appointment at the Conference had been unanimous there was a considerable amount of prejudice against it in the denomination itself. That a confirmed believer in spiritual evolution, with a strong emphasis upon the growth of inspiration through centuries of increasing life, should be appointed to such an office puzzled and offended those who clung to the old theory of literal, plenary inspiration from Genesis to Revelation. The following confidential letter, written to Peake by an enlightened Primitive Methodist layman some eighteen months after his appointment to Hartley College, will indicate the kind of feeling that was in existence in many circles :

“As an ardent Primitive and admirer of your great abilities I venture to address you on a

subject that you are as I know almost ignorant of and one which may seriously concern you. There is a strong feeling, how strong I had no idea until recently, existing amongst certain of our ministerial and lay brethren regarding your Scripture expositions to the students at the Institute. It is their intention to raise the question at next Conference, and as one who is in thorough sympathy with your teaching this must be my sole excuse for addressing you, so that when the time comes you may be in a position to defend your positions. There seems to be a crisis ahead of us, more especially when I consider the utterly nonsensical language of some of the perturbed spirits, one going so far recently as to describe your teaching as German Rationalism pure and unadulterated. Your recent articles have interested me very much and I have been greatly benefited and helped thereby. I do hope the superfluous energy of the dissatisfied may expend itself before Conference, but I am in a singular position for judging as my business takes me to all parts of the country, and speaking candidly I do not think it will. I am anxious for the future of our Church and believe it to depend largely on our coming ministers and hence on you."

Such attacks, however, never became serious, and the important point to remember is that for thirty-seven years the College Committee recommended Peake's name and the Conference re-appointed him without discussion. Three factors in particular contributed to establish him in his position.

1. It was due to the fact that the Church as a whole maintained a friendly attitude towards him. While there were those both in lay and ministerial circles who doubted the wisdom of placing the future ministry in the hands of a modern, though brilliant, scholar, their view was not shared by the majority. It is important that this should be said. It is a mistake to think that the whole of Primitive Methodism was living in a backwater totally unable to appreciate the intellectual revolution that was taking place. There were strong reactionary elements in the denomination, but there was also a dawn breaking upon the hills, and Peake was fortunate in that he came at a time when the thirst for knowledge was beginning to find expression through study circle, through Ministerial Association, and through articles in *The Primitive Methodist Quarterly*.

2. It was due to the fact that Peake had an excellent friend and supporter in the person of Sir William Hartley, who was able to put matters through when the situation became difficult. He advocated the claims of Peake at the Primitive Methodist Conferences. He paid his salary for the first five years. He enlarged the College in 1897 and again in 1906. He made it possible for the curriculum to be extended to two and then to three years. He enabled the College to increase its staff by paying the salaries of new tutors for a fixed term. He contributed the fees for Arts and Divinity courses at Manchester University. He instituted a considerable number of scholarships for needy students. He did much to help ministers by offering valuable books at

reduced prices and by providing them with financial assistance to attend Summer Schools of Theology. During the first thirty years of Peake's work at Hartley College he was his loyal friend and constant helper.

3. It was due more than anything else to the personality of Peake. Students who had been accustomed to hold prayer meetings for his conversion came to see the folly of their ways, and began to render him an allegiance that only deepened in intensity as the years passed by. His keen sense of humour, his wide range of scholarship, his logical presentation of truth, his deep spiritual experience, his strong evangelical passion, his expositions in the lecture room and his prayers in the college chapel, revealing as they did the greatness of his mind and heart, slowly but surely enabled him to carry everything before him. It was once said of a well-known minister that he could visit fifty homes in a morning and make each of its inmates feel that he had the first claim upon his attention. Peake had a genius for friendship, and in his quiet way he made his students feel that he had a personal interest in them—an interest that was not lost when they went out into the wider service of the ministry. He followed their careers with a concern that amounted almost to that of a father, and on meeting them his eyes would always light up with a strange joy. The following tributes from his old students taken from the scores that have been sent, either personally to the family, or publicly through the press, will indicate what is meant better than anything else :

“Dr. Peake enabled me to discern as never before the difference between having a theology and having a personal spiritual experience of truth. To adopt an illustration recently used, I learned many things about the Twenty-third Psalm from Dr. Peake but above all he introduced me to the Shepherd himself. He opened up the Gospel to us in such a way that ultimately the veil fell from the figure of Jesus, and we saw ‘the Face Divine that haunts the hopes of men.’ ”—*Rev. Frank Holmes.*

“When we were passing through our intellectual measles and felt we could not preach, for we could not attain to faith, it was a revelation to see our Doctor worshipping in Church, and a benediction to hear him pray in a prayer meeting. I do not recall his talking much to me or others about his religion, but it hit us with the impact of light whenever we even thought of him. He brought with him into the arena of life the quiet of the Quaker. He achieved world fame as a scholar and kept the evangelical passion of Spurgeon. He was the quiet teacher who made it possible for a host of men to preach, and not only gave them a Gospel message to preach, but led the way to the life that must be lived. He walked among us as a gallant Christian gentleman carrying the world’s honours with a light and gracious ease.”—*Rev. Arthur Hird.*

“We know that the men of other fellowships envied us him, and we rather suspect that some of them smiled at our enthusiasm when we spoke of him. But they did not know. How could they know? For one thing, none of us was

ever forgotten. If we had been in his class he remembered the year, the very place in which we sat, and some of the questions we had asked and the comments we had made. Sometimes these glimpses of our callow youth were disconcerting, but they were always humorous, and we could join in the laugh. How he linked us with the unforgettable, and renewed within us the spirit of other days! That was it! That was why when men spoke of Peake there was a queer twitching at the heart. To meet with him, and to talk with him for only five minutes, made that day a red-letter day, and what he said ("What have you been reading lately?" "How are they all at home?" "How is the work going?") something to be cherished and related with pride. Many a man working obscurely, hardly driven, tasting none of the fruits of popularity, has gone back from such a contact with the freshness of the earth after rain. No, only our own men can understand why Peake meant what he did to them."—Anonymous tribute in *The Methodist Leader*, August 29th, 1929.

"I went to Hartley a raw youth from a mining town, one whose education was very meagre. He took hold of me, gave me a view point, and to-day those three years are still the greatest, the most memorable of my life. What I am, what I hope to be, are due to him and him alone."

"Dr. Peake was more than a professor to the students; he was the true friend of every man who came under his tuition."

"One wonders if any scholar anywhere has

ever been so universally and deeply loved in any Church."

On his arrival at Hartley College, Peake summoned an informal meeting of the students to talk over subjects and methods of work. There were only twenty-eight students in residence and there was no staff apart from himself. The whole of the curriculum was in his hands and included six courses on Biblical subjects, a history of Christian Doctrine, and, for the first year, tuition in Greek. As the staff was increased with the years the work was divided and new subjects were added. To begin with, however, Peake was responsible for each course that was taken, and throughout his thirty-seven years at the College was the ruling mind on its staff.

An important piece of work that he did soon after his arrival was to lay the foundations of a respectable College library. The library then in existence was a disgrace to the Connexion. Many of the volumes had long been out of date while others had in many cases been superseded by newer and better editions. Methodist Theology could be found in superabundance with frequently more than one copy of the same book. The work of reform was commenced in earnest. Obsolete literature was cleared out, duplicate copies were disposed of, and a list for subscriptions was opened and advertised. Several generous promises were received and within less than twelve months the library had altered beyond recognition.

The way in which Peake conducted his classes will be of interest to many, and the following

extracts, written by his old students, constitute our best source of information on this point :

"It must not be supposed that Dr. Peake had an easy task. He came up against cherished opinions and long established methods and deep-seated prejudices. In the Lecture Room shocks were frequent. To expostulate was futile. 'Do you mean to say, Mr. Peake, that the book of Genesis is not Mosaic?' asked one. 'A mosaic,' was the swift reply, 'that is precisely what it is.' Or again, 'What books would you recommend us to read in order that we may better understand the Prophets?' 'The Prophecies.' The task assigned was : 'Extract the doctrine of God from the Song of Deborah.' One of the essayists drew on his source of theological knowledge and set out the doctrine at length. He found a note written in the margin—'Excellent, but what has it to do with the Song of Deborah?'"—Rev. J. Swinden, *The Holborn Review*, Jan., 1930.

"In our time the lectures had to be taken down from the Professor's dictation. Now they have 'a more excellent way,' and my fortunate successors, with a printed outline of the lecture before them, listen while he talks in that fascinating, illuminative, inexhaustible way of his, the low, caressing voice expanding and unfolding and elucidating with masterly analysis and synthesis. You see, I know a little about it, and I will explain how. On two mornings of the week we would be three consecutive hours—with breaks of five minutes between—taking down the dictated lectures ; seventy of us in a too limited lecture hall. Often by the time the

third hour was reached the close air, the regular rhythm of the dictated sentences, the monotonous scratching of seventy pens, would begin to tell, and try as one would the drowsed physical condition became too much for intelligent attention. On more than one occasion I remember writing like an inhuman machine, the pen mechanically obeying the far-away voice, the whole action almost somnambulant. Then, all at once there would come a pause, and the dictated lecture hung blessedly suspended while the voice, wonderfully fresh and stimulating, commented, expatiated, or digressed, for five—perhaps for ten minutes. Sometimes it was pure digression and we would be surprised by a rich, rollicking story that shook us awake with delicious mirth and braced us like a tonic to the end of the morning's work.

“Have any of my old college-fellows forgotten that morning when he read us from Hippolytus the tragi-comic story of Callistus, consuming the while with inward laughter? Now I am firmly convinced that on these occasions the Professor saw our lost condition, and deliberately administered the invigorating draught! His eyes were always busy as he paused in his dictation—it was amazing how quickly he got to know us from one another—and more than once I looked up and caught him with that twinkling eye and dimpling of the cheek in the region of the moustache, as some little humorous attitude or passage among his unconscious ‘slaves of the pen’ met his quick observation.”—Rev. Phil Fisher, *The Primitive Methodist Leader*, Dec. 5th, 1912.

“ He did not try to run men into a mould—to make them think as he did. His aim was to get his students to face up to facts and to think about them for themselves. To the raw student who wanted to be told what he ought to believe, the Doctor’s lectures were like a sudden plunge into deep water. We looked for a raft ; he insisted that we should swim. He would state a problem. He would give us the views of Duhm and Cheyne, Wellhausen and Kuenen, and we wanted to ask, and occasionally an overbold student would ask, ‘ What is your view, Doctor ? ’ But he would seldom say. He knew that to us in our undeveloped state his view would be taken as final, and he wanted us to beat out our own views. And for the most part we have done it. Dr. Peake’s pupils have not always agreed with him on points of criticism and interpretation and doctrine. But he did what needed to be done ; he gave every man amongst us an appreciation of the Bible, and the true way of approach to it.”—Rev. E. B. Storr, *The Christian Social Witness*, Nov., 1929.

“ In the delivery of his lectures the Professor adopts the extempore method, making only occasional references to notes which contain apparently the heads of topics to be treated and particular references which are necessary to illustrate and clinch his main points. As the lecture proceeds one cannot but feel the depth and strength of conviction that lies behind the quiet manner of the lecturer ; the terse nervous English in which the thought is expressed, together with a certain hesitation of delivery

which marks the Professor as he feels for the precise and suitable word, reveals an exceptionally acute and living mind. As the student listens he cannot resist the impression that he is witnessing a mind at work. I am not sure that to me, this was not the most helpful thing about the Doctor. He does not simply deal out bits of information valuable in themselves—this he does in abundance—but he is in himself a living example in method. We saw him at work and were drawn to adopt his method. He did not hurl conclusions at us, but, so to speak, seemed to be ever on the way to conclusions for himself. He gave the impression that he was balancing the evidence afresh in his own mind, testing it anew, and finding the conclusion which it permitted. When the conclusion was finally reached we not only saw it quite clearly, but also saw, equally clearly, the pathway by which it had been approached.”—Professor J. T. Brewis, *The Primitive Methodist Leader*, Dec. 5th, 1912.

“Dr. Peake has also taught English, but this has been unconscious on his part. Scores of men have listened to his voice, carefully enunciating the lucid sentences with their warmth of colour, and have learned in this way better how to speak their native tongue than they would have done by the reading of many grammars. Sometimes the Doctor has been persuaded to give a lecture on Browning which has opened a new world to the men who heard it. His talks on the formation of a minister’s library, too, have been highly valued. The addresses that he gives at the beginning of each new college year are



Photo: J. Porter.

PRIOR TO METHODIST UNION CAMPAIGN



solemn seasons. The earnest plea for a wise use of the time and opportunity that the College presents, and for the loftiest conception of the ministerial vocation, is heard with respect because it is so evidently the utterance of one who lives out the ideal he proposes. But the chief element of power in the character of Dr. Peake is his intense religious experience. A deep mystic religion has made him 'very sure of God.' As far as criticism is concerned, he may be modern, but it would be hard to find one who more fully realises Wesley's best conception of Methodism."—Dr. W. L. Wardle, *The Primitive Methodist Leader*, Dec. 5th, 1912.

Early in 1903 Peake's students, past and present, decided to make him a presentation commemorating his ten years' work at the College. The function was without precedent in the history of the Church, and was the outcome of a spontaneous desire on the part of those who had come under his teaching. Sir William Hartley was asked to preside and Dr. Fairbairn was invited to give the address. The presentation consisted of a very handsome cabinet made of dark pollard oak and well fitted with drawers, cupboards and shelves. Peake was very proud of the gift, and it was a rare thing for visitors to stay at the house without being taken to see it. When the family moved to Freshfield in 1912 it was a special source of delight to him to have a large study in which the cabinet could be seen to full advantage.

In 1913, on the suggestion of the Rev. George Armitage, the secretary of the College, it was

decided to recognise the completion of Peake's twenty-one years at the College. For various reasons, however, the ceremony had to be delayed till June 11th, 1914. A subscription portrait of Peake was painted by Mr. A. T. Nowell, and unveiled by the Rev. John Day Thompson. He is shown wearing his Divinity robes and holding in his hands a copy of the Scriptures. Three beautiful stained glass windows were given and unveiled by Sir William Hartley who said that he looked back to Peake's appointment in 1892 with unalloyed pleasure. The theme for each window was suggested by Peake, and designed by Mr. Anning Bell. The large central window over the communion table represents Christ at Calvary. Peake was anxious that the actual Crucifixion should not be depicted as he felt that this was too morbid. The moment chosen was that when Jesus had actually reached Calvary but before the execution itself had begun. In the centre of the picture we see the figure of Jesus with the Cross in the background. The Roman centurions are keeping the rabble back on the right hand, while on the left hand the sorrowing women may be seen, faithful to the end. At the base on the left hand is a picture of Bethlehem, and on the right hand is one of Jerusalem. The window itself bears the fitting inscription: "Unto Him that loveth us and loosed us from our sins." In view of the fact that the College was designed for the training of ministers Peake felt that Elijah on Carmel and Paul at Athens would be appropriate subjects for the other windows, and the northern and southern

transepts were accordingly beautified in this way. At the tea, which followed the service in the chapel, interesting speeches were delivered by Professor F. E. Weiss, the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Dr. J. H. Moulton, Dean of the Faculty of Theology, the Rev. James Travis, Professor Humphries, the Rev. George Armitage, and the College treasurer, Mr. T. L. Gerrard, who made a presentation of silver to Dr. and Mrs. Peake. One feature of the celebration which gave Peake particular pleasure was the founding of a number of scholarships and half-scholarships for needy students. His relations with the students had always been very happy, and he was glad to think that they had not been forgotten. The students, too, were anxious not to let the occasion pass unnoticed, and presented him with a revolving summer-house, in which he was accustomed to do much of his work.

It was characteristic of Peake that he found time to write letters of appreciation to all who had contributed their services to the ceremony including the gardener and the cook. His letter to the cook may be quoted as an example :

DEAR COOK,

Now that the celebrations of Thursday are over, my thoughts turn in gratitude to those who did so much to secure for us so happy a gathering. And I feel that very much was due to you, and all your ungrudging labour. Please accept this expression of personal thanks. You will know that this was one of the great days of my life,

and I am glad that the happiness with which I look back upon it is not marred by any feeling that things had not gone smoothly. Will you kindly also convey the same warm thanks to those who have worked with you, especially to Violet. I am grateful to them all. They did us credit in the eyes of our guests.

Yours sincerely,

ARTHUR S. PEAKE.

It was a keen disappointment to him that his secretary, Miss Elsie Cann, was through illness unable to be present at the ceremony. His disappointment found expression in a letter that he wrote to her in which he pays his tribute to the loyal and devoted service that she had rendered to him in his work :

“ One of the pleasures of anticipation that I had was in thinking that when my work was receiving such recognition you would be there to receive your share in the recognition, for you deserve to have no little of the credit for what I have done. Your loyal unselfish labour, your unfailing consideration, the strenuous industry, the temper and spirit in which all has been done during the long happy years of unbroken harmony and fellowship in a common task that we have spent together are beyond all my thanks and praise. And I should like you to have felt, as I was speaking, that I am not monopolising all the gratitude and congratulations but giving you in my heart some portion of the tributes I was being paid. I feel that it is not right when people

calmly annex to themselves the sole credit when others should receive their part in it. And when I think of what your part has been, it is not just of the mechanical work that forms so much of it, but of the keen and eager interest you have taken in it, and the sympathy you have always shown. I know that if you cannot be with us you will be with us in spirit. But I should like you to know this one theme of my thoughts as I look back over the years I have spent at Hartley College in which you have filled so large a place."

The remaining years of Peake's work at Hartley College were not marked by any special event. Tuition went on as usual, though during the War the work had to be modified and finally suspended, the College being converted into a Red Cross Hospital. After the signing of peace the curriculum was restored, and in 1919 the staff was augmented through the amalgamation of the Hartley and United Methodist Colleges for tutorial purposes. Peake's death on August 19th, 1929, will serve as a landmark in the life of the College indicating the close of one period and the opening of another.

"His passing marks the end of an era in the history of Primitive Methodism—an era created by himself. No one has been able to affect our Church for its permanent good as he has done and no loss has ever been so keenly felt as his departure."—Rev. George Bennett, Editor of *The Methodist Leader*.

CHAPTER IV

OTHER INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING

Lancashire College.

But Peake's tutorial work could not be limited to Hartley College. Though the Church in which he had been brought up always had the first claim upon his affections he never forgot that he owed a duty to other Churches as well. This conviction found practical expression in the Spring of 1895, when a vacancy was created at the Lancashire Independent College through the death of Dr. Alexander Thomson. Peake was approached with a view to taking over part of Dr. Thomson's work, and the following account of his contribution to the life and curriculum of Lancashire College has been sent to me by Dr. Robert Mackintosh, who was for many years his friend and colleague in this department of his work :

"When I first knew Lancashire Independent College, at the time when Professor Peake also was a newcomer to Manchester, the teaching of the Hebrew Old Testament at the College was in the hands of the Rev. Dr. Alexander Thomson, minister of Rusholme Road Congregational Church. Dr. Thomson's personal influence was very deep ; he was not merely respected but loved ; but he drove in class with very slack reins, and his mind was

hermetically sealed against modern scientific views in criticism. One quaint manifestation of love for his students was his borrowing the translation of Wellhausen's *History of Israel* from the college library and then steadily declining to return it—it was safer with him; to him it could do no harm! During Dr. Thomson's illness early in 1895, much of the classwork passed into the hands of the Rev. T. Lewis, M.A., who was then acting as college tutor, and who was fully alive to critical problems and findings. After Dr. Thomson's lamented death, in May of the same year, it became possible to introduce fuller systematic instruction in Old Testament subjects; and in the new session 1895-96, Professor Peake began his direct service to the Congregational Institution by lecturing on Old Testament Introduction and also on Old Testament Theology. The Old Testament Texts and their exegesis remained for the present with Mr. Lewis. Some of his pupils came to him having learned the elements of Hebrew in University classes. Others unfortunately were raw beginners.

"In view of further probable changes, the late Rev. Samuel Pearson, M.A., of Broughton Park Congregational Church, who was just ceasing to act as chairman of the College Committee, was good enough to talk over the situation with me. He had the curious idea that I might volunteer for 'some' of the work in the Old Testament department; but I had already inherited from my predecessor

a sufficiently miscellaneous assortment of minor subjects, and I could by no means claim to be an Old Testament expert. However, our talk gave me the opportunity of urging upon Mr. Pearson the desirableness of making the fullest possible use of the services of so brilliant a scholar and so friendly a neighbour as Professor Peake. This view was accepted by Mr. Pearson and was pressed by him in committee. There was some hesitation; a section of the committee was reluctant to part with such a distinguished alumnus of the College as Mr. Lewis—but it was not really practical politics to contemplate the establishment of a new, whole-time professorship, especially when Professor Peake was on the spot, an illustrious master in all branches of Biblical scholarship. Accordingly, when the way was cleared by Mr. Lewis leaving Lancashire to become tutor at Brecon—where he has long been Principal—the Committee of Lancashire College did the right thing, and were fortunate enough to induce Dr. Peake to teach Old Testament Texts, while continuing the course of lectures upon Old Testament Theology and Introduction.

“We always felt him to be an exceptional man—a layman who was more than welcome in every meeting of ministers, and a staunch Methodist who knew, and who certainly did not dislike, Congregationalist ways. For years we enjoyed his presence in the Education Committee and also in the General Committee of the College. He did not of course vote,

but he was an invaluable adviser as well as a delightful friend. And, when Dr. Adeney became Principal of Lancashire College and instituted a system of staff meetings—there were four of us, including Dr. Peake, in those days—Dr. Peake willingly attended these smaller gatherings also. Had he been a Congregationalist outright, he could have done no more for us. I need hardly add, that all the supporters of Lancashire College—those who had hesitated about the new policy, as well as those who welcomed it from the first—fully appreciated the advantage to the name and fame of our College due to our having captured a share in the services of Dr. Peake.

“When, on the death of Professor Hogg in 1912, Dr. Peake took over extra work in connexion with the Theological Faculty at Manchester University, where he had already been the first Rylands Professor of Biblical Exegesis since 1904, the University not unnaturally stipulated that he should cut down his outside work. It was felt that he could not be asked to forsake Hartley College; but Lancashire College—as also the United Methodist College, where he had been lecturing for a shorter term of years—had to lose his visits; and we at least lost his wonted presence in our committees. The change was a loss—a great loss; but the gains which the Theological Faculty brought us were greater still. One incidental gain was that henceforward students from Lancashire College were able, at the University, to attend certain of the New

Testament lectures, as well as the Old Testament lectures of the Rylands Professor."

The Rev. George Shillito, M.A., of Hope Congregational Church, Oldham, has sent the following notes on the early years of Peake's connexion with Lancashire College :

"The classes were uneventful because they were so efficient. Work went on steadily from week to week without sensation of any kind. His teaching was so thorough that few questions were needed. When they were asked, the answers were frank and comprehensive. In his classes we seemed always within the atmosphere of scholarship and intellectual sincerity. The only time I ever saw him at a loss in an emergency was when a student from North Lancashire demanded truculently, 'D'you believe i' th' flūd?' At that period Peake was not intimate with the Burnley accent.

"Peake's influence was like that of a river gently overflowing its banks, and quietly fertilising all the adjacent land; then subsiding without surge or tumult, leaving surprising increment of prosperity behind it. He seemed to take possession of one, and remained in possession without a symptom of domination."

The United Methodist College.

In the winter Session of 1904, Peake was appointed lecturer at The United Methodist Free Church College, Manchester. In a letter to his father, dated November 10th, 1904, he has a reference to this :

"I could not have found time to go over to that side of Manchester on purpose, but as I have to be at the University for two hours on Wednesday afternoon, and it is near, I go there at twelve and stay to dinner, then go on to the University. As I have not any new lectures to prepare for them, it adds not very much to my work, and is a little contribution towards Methodist Union."

Peake lectured on Old and New Testament Introduction and Theology till the summer of 1912, when, as we have seen, he was compelled to relinquish his post owing to the extra work that he had undertaken at the University. In 1919, however, the United Methodist College became amalgamated with Hartley College for the purpose of teaching, and Peake was brought once more into intimate relations with the staff and students of the United Methodist College.

The University of Manchester.

In February, 1904, Peake became the first Rylands Professor of Biblical Exegesis, and the first Dean of the Faculty of Theology, established that year at the University of Manchester. This was a unique appointment since it constituted the first example of a Professorship in Divinity being conferred upon a nonconformist at an English University. The Advisory Committee, on whose recommendation the unanimous appointment was made, included such representative men as Dr. Maclaren, Dr. Caleb Scott, Principal

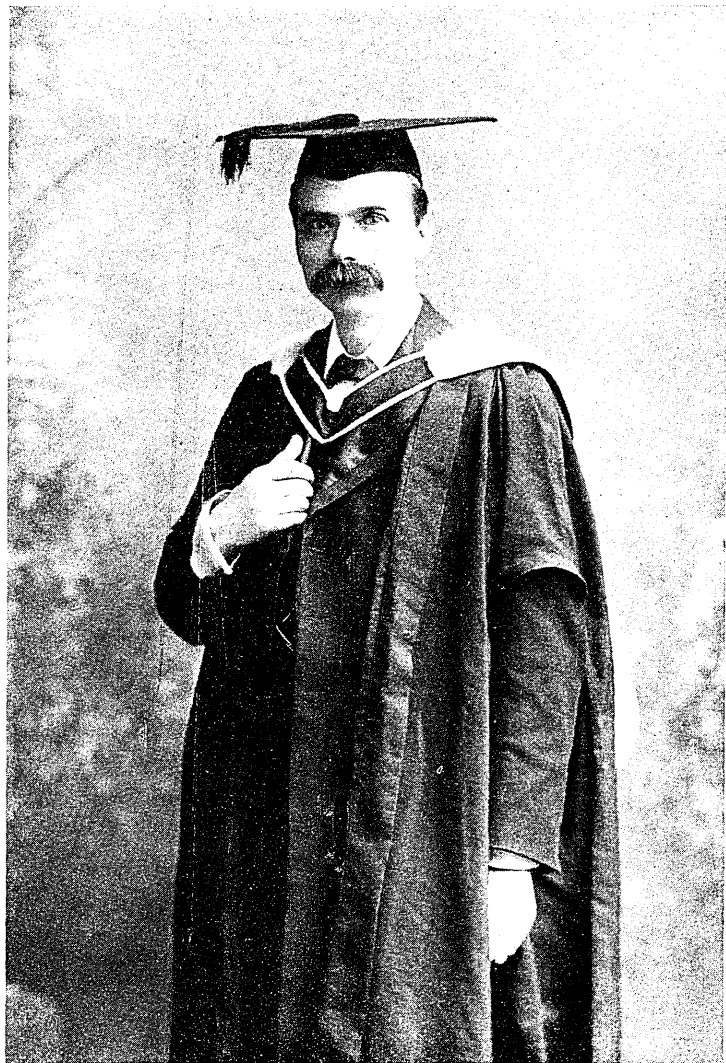


Photo: Porter, Manchester

BACHELOR OF DIVINITY AT MANCHESTER

Hopkinson, the Bishop, and the Dean of Manchester.

The new Theological Faculty gave distinction to the University in two important respects. (a) It became the first modern University to teach as well as to examine in Theology. (b) It became the first British University to establish a Theological Faculty on undenominational lines. These two experiments, especially the latter, about which a further word must be said, were in no small degree the achievements of Peake.

Through the second experiment the University was brought into close and almost corporate touch with the different denominational colleges, and yet remained absolutely free from all theological tests. The colleges were frankly denominational, training men for the ministry in accordance with their particular creed, with full liberty to colour their teaching doctrinally or ecclesiastically as they thought fit. The University adopted such courses of lectures in the colleges as it considered adequate for its own curriculum, and the Faculty of Theology contained lecturers from these colleges recognised as such by the University. When the experiment was first proposed there were many who prophesied failure, partly on the ground that the University would not be able to overcome theological prejudice, and partly because they were afraid that the denominational colleges would suffer in proportion as the University grew in strength. Even Fairbairn had misgivings on the latter point as is apparent

from a letter that he wrote to Peake, dated May 16th, 1904:

"My feeling is that the scheme as it has been drafted and put into force, will involve the ruin of all the higher teaching in our colleges, transferring the centre of gravity as regards theological teaching from them to Owen's College (the institution out of which the University sprang). I do feel that our colleges, Lancashire, yours, Didsbury, the Baptists', and so forth, have the whole question in the hollow of their hands, and that if you like you can settle it in a way to enhance your own worth; but if it be allowed that Owen's College or the University provide the major part of the teaching, then the days of your pre-eminence will be numbered."

On May 27th, however, we find Fairbairn writing in a somewhat happier vein:

"You have great opportunities and great influence, and I am sure they did very wisely in appointing you Dean. What concerned me altogether was the chance that the institution of a degree in Theology offered to the colleges. It is a great means of bringing them into immediate relation with the University, and I am sure the churches would rise at once to the position of equipping them, so as to bring them to the dignity of academic institutions. I am glad to find you so hopeful, and with you as Dean I cannot but feel that all will yet be well."

The system worked perfectly and thoroughly justified Fairbairn's more optimistic premonition. Time proved that there was no

Faculty in the University that worked more harmoniously than the Faculty of Theology, not even, to quote Sir Alfred Hopkinson, the Faculty of Music. There has never been the faintest tinge of the *odium theologicum* about the experiment. In the main it was due to what Professor Burkitt in his lecture celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Faculty called, the "eirenic and enlightened guidance" of Peake.

Dr. A. J. Grieve, referring to the same matter in *The Christian World*, August 22nd, 1929, wrote :

"It is difficult to imagine the Faculty of Theology at Manchester without Peake. In a peculiar sense *he* was the Faculty, its main founder and its brightest ornament. At the forthcoming twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations in October, he was to have told the story of its birth and happy life, an experiment in eight-fold denominational fellowship that I think is unparalleled."

The following tribute relating to Peake's work at the University as a whole has been sent by Professor F. E. Weiss, Vice-Chancellor of the University :

"When the Faculty of Theology was established in the University of Manchester in 1904, two Professorships were created, one in Comparative Religions and one in Biblical Criticism and Exegesis. The occupants of these chairs, Professor Rhys Davids and Professor A. S. Peake were both men of great distinction in the subjects they taught, but of very different personality. Both contributed

their share to the reputation and to the development of the new Faculty, but there is little doubt that Peake was more specially identified with it, and that his influence on it during the twenty-five years of his association with it was paramount. Not being a member of the Faculty of Theology, I cannot give any details concerning Professor Peake's work on or for the Faculty, but of his interest in the University generally and his activity on the Senate, I can speak with some knowledge. Though Peake held an appointment at the Hartley College at the same time as his University professorship, his allegiance to the University was never half-hearted. From the first he identified himself completely with its work and aspirations and no one would have guessed that his services and interests were engaged elsewhere as well. He made himself familiar with the work of the allied Faculties in the University and took an obviously sincere interest in the general welfare of the University and a full share in its fortunes and aims. He was regular in his attendance at the University functions as well as at the committees to which he was appointed. When the Council in 1925 invited him to act as Pro-Vice-Chancellor, they were not merely paying him a compliment in recognition of his long and valuable services to the University, but they knew that they were appointing a member of the Senate, who by his experience and knowledge of University affairs and by his personal tact and wisdom could worthily represent the Vice-

Chancellor at public ceremonials or at the meetings of the Senate and Council. Though Peake's modesty and retiring disposition may have led him to think that he might not be equal to the duties of his office, no one among his colleagues doubted the wise choice of the Council.

"On the Senate, which he attended with great regularity, Peake was always listened to with respect. Scrupulously anxious to present all the cons as well as the pros of any proposal he was advocating, his transparent honesty won for him the complete confidence of his colleagues. His speeches were always tactful and conciliatory to his opponents; nevertheless, he held his opinions firmly and fearlessly, but they were always reasonable and never extreme. No member of the Senate was more respected or gained more completely the esteem and affections of his colleagues. His bright example and his lovable personality will never be forgotten by them."

The following tribute referring to Peake's work in connexion with the Faculty of Theology has been sent by Dr. H. McLachlan, Principal of the Unitarian College, Manchester :

"Professor Peake was the first Dean of the Faculty of Theology and held office from 1904-1908. He was the mainspring of the organisation and of the courses of study. He was in very close touch with the affiliated colleges, had been lecturer at Lancashire Independent College, at the United Methodist College, and at Hartley College, and frequently took part

in the meetings and celebrations held at other colleges. He was present at the installation of a new Principal at the Moravian College. He spoke at the opening of the new library at the Unitarian College in 1923, and was afterwards a guest at the Old Students' Union Dinner, his last public appearance being at the Seventy-fifth Anniversary Celebrations of the College held at the Memorial Hall, July 3rd, 1929.

"He was particularly interested in maintaining the fundamental principle of the University that no question should be asked in any examination in such a form as to call for any expression of personal religious belief on the part of the candidates, and several times in my hearing challenged the form of the questions in the University examination papers set on this ground.

"He never missed a meeting of the Theological Faculty, and rarely missed a meeting of the University Theological Society at which teachers and students met in his room. As a leading representative of the Faculty on the Senate he made a point of attending the latter with great regularity. He took a prominent part in the revision of the courses for the B.D. degree and the establishment of the Certificate in Theology in 1924. He was a Vice-President of the Egyptian and Oriental Society established in 1911 by his friend, Professor Hogg, and was deeply interested in the Hellenistic Seminar founded by Professor J. H. Moulton. On two occasions he was the honoured guest of the Seminar at dinner.

“Dr. Peake was always ready to help an old pupil or a colleague by furnishing prefaces to their published works. Some of the successes of his students are worth noting. Of the first group of graduates two became Principals of their Colleges (United Methodist and Unitarian), a third (a Moravian), became Lecturer in Ecclesiastical History in the University, and afterwards Professor of History in the McGill University, Montreal. A graduate of 1910 (Episcopalian) after serving his College as Principal, and the University as Lecturer and Secretary of the Theological Faculty, was appointed Chaplain and Fellow at University College, Oxford, and became Bampton Lecturer in 1930. A graduate of 1906 was awarded a D.D. at Manchester in 1920, and another graduate of the same year took the Ph.D. (Harvard) in 1907, and served for ten years until his death as a Lecturer in one of the colleges. Two graduates of 1910 and 1914 are also on the staff of Congregationalist and Baptist Colleges respectively.

“There had been great opposition to the establishment of the Faculty, but this disappeared completely, largely because of the confidence felt by members of all churches in the wisdom, toleration, and scholarship of Dr. Peake.”

The following tribute referring to Peake's activities in connection with the Primitive Methodist University Union, of which he was President, has been sent by Mrs. Meachim, Vice-President of the Union, better known to

the members of the University as Miss Dorothy Bell :

"I was in constant touch with Dr. Peake, especially in connection with the activities of the P.M.U.U. of which, as President, he was the life and soul. We used to refer to the Society as Dr. Peake's; he used often to say that it was one of his chiefest loves, and certainly for it he sacrificed very much of his time and energy, being always the most punctual and regular attender.

"We loved him for his laughter-making. Some of us kept special 'scrap-books' of his sayings and anecdotes; he could always remember the right story. On one occasion some of the P.M.U.U. young gentlemen were referring indiscreetly to the age of a certain P.M.U.U. young lady :

"'Once,' said the Doctor, with that twinkle of his, 'a great surgeon was carving, rather violently, a chicken. One of his lady guests remarked—"My dear sir, I shouldn't like you to carve me!"

"Ah." replied the surgeon, "my dear lady, you see you are not a chicken." 'Notice,' said the Doctor, 'he was careful not to say "no chicken."

"In the train, on the return journey from one of the P.M.U.U. rambles, he recited to us curious epitaphs, and on a page from his diary he wrote down for me his favourites.

"When he was forced, through an attack of influenza to be absent for the first time from a P.M.U.U. meeting, he took endless trouble to

see that, as Vice-President, I carried out correctly my duties for him. As a surprise item for the programme he sent along some 'Limericks' of his own composition. Some time afterwards, when I was at his home, I found that he had, in his own handwriting, compiled a series of these, and (for my delight) had dedicated them to me after the style of the Ancient Manuscripts in his beloved 'Rylands.' And with what childlike joy he gave instructions to Miss Cann as to how she must sew together the pages! This was a most important document! It ran:

A Series of Ingenious Poems
Belonging to that Elevated Type Called Limericks

Composed by Arthur S. Peake
President of the P.M.U.U.

That is the Primitive Methodist University Union
And with Great Labour herewith by his Own Hand
Written Out for Presentation as a Token of his Esteem
to his Dear Friend and Colleague

DOROTHY BELL

alias, as in the Said Diverting Limericks Shall Duly Appear,

DOROTHY B

(Who, for all her Protestation herein, is No Dumb Bell)
Vice-President and aforetime Secretary
of the Said P.M.U.U.

In which Poems are not obscurely hinted the afflictions of the Author by Illness and by Accident; the Vivacity and Brilliance of the Vice-President and withal her Sweet Humility; and the Merry Satire of the President on the Myth of his Superhuman Industry.

I.

Said a firm and cautious M.D.
 When sauced by a rebel 'flu'-ee,
 "Had it been a she-doctor,
 You had fatally shocked her,
 You insolent Influenzee!"

2.

From its cage in the Manchester Zoo
 There wriggled a P.M.U.U.
 But soon on its ramble
 Its Head on a bramble
 Was torn—so it's back at Belle-Vue.

3.

That Vital Spark, Dorothy B,
 Of the P.M.U.U. was V.P.
 When they said, "Sweet Bell, tinkle,
 Bright Vital Spark, twinkle,"
 She replied, "Just a Dumb-Bell I'll be."

4.

A conceited Professor called Peake,
 Did twelve months' work in a week,
 When they said, "You will rue it,
 If you will overdo it,"
 He replied, "Don't you know that I'm
 PEAKE!!!"

"And there was another reason why we so loved him. He took such an interest in us. If he saw us in the street or on the tram-car, he would go out of his way to speak to us, remembering whether we were Arts or Science, whether we were present at the last P.M.U.U.—and making us feel important.

“To commemorate his sixtieth birthday, the P.M.U.U. presented him with a gold pencil (now my own treasured possession), and I remember the grateful delight he showed in that surprise. He quoted a favourite skit on Calvinism :

You can and you can't,
You will and you won't,
You'll be damned if you do,
You'll be damned if you don't.

He was pre-destined to receive that pencil !

“He took part as one of us in all the games at our social functions. One game he particularly enjoyed was called ‘Buzz.’ If your number was a factor of seven, you must say ‘Buzz,’ and if you didn’t say ‘Buzz,’ you had to sit on the floor. Once he sat on the floor first of anybody and gladly welcomed there Dr. Wardle and Mr. Pickett !

“In one of the last talks I had with him (we were discussing Jonah and the whale !) he said : ‘Ah ! The fault the world has to find with Christianity is not a scientific one—not even an intellectual one. It is that Christians are so unlike Christ !’”

The John Rylands Library.

The John Rylands Library was founded by Mrs. Rylands in memory of her husband, the famous Manchester merchant, and though it has only been in existence for a little over thirty years it occupies a foremost position

among the libraries of the British Empire. To enable ministers to gain access to books which they could not afford to purchase Mr. Rylands had formed a small theological library at Stretford near Manchester. On his death his vast fortune was left in the hands of his wife, who determined to create a great library in which the ideals of her husband should find the fullest expression. Theology was to be the dominant interest, though other branches of learning were to be adequately represented. By a stroke of good fortune the great Althorp Library, with its magnificent collection of early printed books, came into the market about this time, and Mrs. Rylands succeed in purchasing it for nearly a quarter of a million. This not only brought great distinction to her Library, but also prevented the dreaded catastrophe of breaking up a collection which had only been formed after much skill and patience. The services of Mr. Basil Champneys, the architect for Mansfield College, were secured as architect, and all who are familiar with the inside of the building testify to its extraordinary beauty. Two years after its completion Mrs. Rylands gave further distinction to the Library by purchasing the manuscripts that belonged to the Earl of Crawford for a sum almost equal to what she had paid for the Althorp Collection.

For over thirty years Peake was actively associated with the administration of the Library, and at the time of his death was the only surviving active representative of the original Council of eighteen Governors. In 1905 he was appointed

Chairman of the Book Committee, an office which he held for twenty-four years. In 1921 he was made Vice-Chairman of the Council, and in 1927 was elected Chairman, in succession to Sir Henry Miers.

Shortly before the building was opened he was invited, along with the other Governors, to inspect the Library under the guidance of Mrs. Rylands. A little later, when the Governors met at her house to discuss the best arrangements that could be made for the Library, he was fortunate enough to secure a few minutes' talk with her as to the future of the institution. It had been his fear that it might become just a magnificent museum for rarities, and he was glad to discover that this was far from her intentions. She wished emphatically that it should be a Library in which the student should be able to find at his disposal all the best and latest literature on his subject. Referring to his work for the Library in *The Holborn Review* for January, 1925, Peake writes :

"One of my first tasks was to discover how far the best recent literature on the Bible was already provided. I found a large number of gaps, especially in the foreign literature, and made a detailed report upon them. Mrs. Rylands, hearing of it, ordered the whole of them to be procured without delay. Another thing which I recall with gratitude touched the purchase of German books. I generally prepared on my own account a list for each meeting of the Book Committee containing suggestions of recent theological literature. The criticism was more than once

made that we were buying too many German books. As a matter of fact the books were all carefully selected and probably out of a list of monthly publications in German theology I should not as a rule pick ten per cent., and rarely put anything down for which I was not prepared personally to vouch. During that time Mrs. Rylands asked me to see her on a matter about which she desired to consult me. When we had talked this over she asked me how we were getting on with our work and I told her about my difficulty. She said that she should back me whole-heartedly, because we could not have the best literature unless the German books were purchased. Fortunately, as time went on, the member of the Committee who had felt specially doubtful came quite round to my view."

On several occasions the Library received from Mrs. Rylands gifts of great value. Sometimes it would be a unique copy of some valuable work, as the photographic facsimile of the *Codex Vaticanus*, copies of which were very scarce and costly owing to the destruction by fire of most of the edition at Danesi's in Rome. At other times it would be a large collection of works, as a splendid Dante collection, or a library of mystical and occult literature. During the first twenty-five years the average number of additions made to the Library each year was about ten thousand books. Unfortunately, Mrs. Rylands herself passed away early in 1908.

One of the most remarkable enterprises undertaken by the Library was the reconstruction of

the Library at Louvain to replace, as far as possible, the great collection which had been so ruthlessly destroyed by the Germans in 1914. The main credit for this venture must be given to Dr. Guppy, the Librarian, though in his colossal task he received the loyal support of Peake and his colleagues. Nearly fifty thousand volumes were received at the Library, from a multitude of contributors, and sent to Louvain. In acknowledging this magnificent gift, the eminent Biblical scholar, Professor A. Van Hoonacker, wrote :

“ The restoration of our Library is progressing splendidly, and it is gratifying for us to acknowledge that the most valuable contributions by far are those of our English friends. Our debt of gratitude towards the Rylands Library is very great indeed and can never be forgotten. Our Library will be a historical monument in a special way : it is going to be for its best part an English Library.”

Peake also rendered valuable service to the Library both as a contributor to its series of lectures and as a writer for its Bulletin. As a lecturer he was one of the most constant contributors to the courses arranged by the Library, and any syllabus in which his name did not appear would have been looked upon as incomplete. As a writer for the Bulletin it is, as Dr. Guppy asserts, but justice to say that his contributions to its pages assisted very materially in raising it to a place of honour among periodicals of genuine theological and literary standing.

The Society for Old Testament Study.

The Society for Old Testament Study exists to bring together Old Testament students for conference, to defend the place of the Old Testament in the religious curriculum, and to promote in every way possible the study of the subject. The first step towards its formation was taken in the early summer of 1916, when a letter signed by six teachers of Old Testament subjects was sent to a number of scholars interested in the matter. Peake was among the signatories. During a conference of theological teachers held at Cambridge in June, 1916, a gathering of Old Testament scholars was held in the rooms of Canon Kennett, when arrangements were made for a meeting to be held at King's College, London, in January, 1917. At that meeting the Society was formally constituted, and though Peake was unable to be present, his name was included in the list of original members.

No further meeting was held during the War, but in 1919 the Society met at Dalton Hall, Manchester, from July 16th—18th. Only five members were present, but they included Peake, who read a paper on "Hebrew Prophecy in Recent Discussion." Such a small meeting was not very encouraging, but those who were present believed in the possibilities of the Society, and to their enthusiasm its continuance was due. Of the five none rendered greater service than Peake, and from that time onwards there were few meetings that he failed to attend. He

joined the Committee of the Society in 1922, and remained on it till 1928, when he retired in accordance with the rule that the senior member of the Committee in each year is ineligible for re-election unless he is a retiring officer. His first definite piece of work for the Society was his editorship of a volume of essays which appeared under the title of *The People and the Book*, to which we have referred elsewhere, and in which an attempt was made to sum up in popular fashion the present position of Old Testament studies. To the editor's wisdom in selecting his contributors, and to his skilful planning of the work, the effort owed the large measure of success which it attained.

Peake was a member of practically every important sub-committee and freely gave of his time and learning to the Society. He was President of the Society in 1924. The meeting at which he delivered his inaugural address in the January of that year was the largest that the Society had held, over forty persons being present. Among the many important contributions that he made to the work of the Society in the years that followed his Presidency, special mention must be made of the part that he took in preparing that most useful little publication, *A Scripture Bibliography*, for which he wrote most of the notes, except those on books for class use, describing each volume mentioned in the text. "Probably no other man living," says Dr. T. H. Robinson, in a communication that he sent me, and to whom I am indebted for much of the information in this section,

"had the combination of knowledge and sound judgment which enabled him to do the work so successfully." Peake indeed had always been deeply interested in the bibliographies for his subjects of study. He had paid special attention to this feature in his Commentary, but owing to the very large number of titles quoted there, nothing but bare lists could be given. In the preparation of *A Scripture Bibliography* he maintained that the bibliography ought to include the New Testament, and that the Society should not simply limit itself to the study of Old Testament literature. To make possible its publication at the very modest sum of sixpence the Society undertook a financial guarantee.

The last paper that Peake read to the Society was on "The Servant of Yahweh," and was delivered at the January meeting of 1927. Unfortunately he was prevented from being present through illness and had to send his paper to be read for him. His health improved later, and he was able to take the chair at one of the sessions of the international gathering held at Oxford in July of the same year.

In closing his communication, Dr. Robinson says :

"But a bare record entirely fails to suggest the part Dr. Peake played in the life of the Society. Looking back, I feel that but for him it would hardly have existed, and there is no one of its members whom we could have spared less easily. Of his personal qualities I have said nothing here, nor need I, for you will have abundant testimony to his kindness, charm, and



Photo: J. Porter.

DOCTOR OF DIVINITY AT ABERDEEN

humour from every correspondent whom you consult."

Aberdeen and Oxford.

In 1907 Peake received the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Divinity at Aberdeen, and in 1920 had a similar degree conferred upon him by Oxford. In both cases he was the first nonconformist layman to be given this distinction, and shortly before the Oxford Degree was bestowed he received from Baron von Hügel a letter which he regarded as the most gratifying and valued compliment ever paid him.

12th June, 1920.

DEAR PROFESSOR PEAKE,

It was a very genuine pleasure to find you amongst those who on the 24th inst. are to receive the honorary D.D. at Oxford. When I first heard of the University thinking of myself in the matter, I told my wife and daughter that the honour would be big or little, in proportion to the significance or otherwise of my fellow doctors; and that I should feel it a very real honour if they had also proffered this degree to Professor Peake. Indeed you were the only name for Great Britain that occurred to me, though now I see that Sir George Adam Smith also especially deserves honour, and indeed that my good friend John Skinner also will form a very worthy recipient. Professor Cooper I must admit to know nothing of; and Mr. Thackeray

I am vague about. But it is pleasant indeed to have two friends—yourself and Dr. Skinner amongst one's fellow recipients, and to know well about a third, Sir G. A. Smith.

Looking thus forward to meeting you at Oxford soon,

With congratulations,

Yours sincerely,

F. VON HÜGEL.

CHAPTER V
METHODIST UNION

Two years after he went to Oxford Peake wrote a strong letter to his cousin, Annetta, urging that the Churches should sink their differences and join in a united crusade against the forces of evil. It is the first intimation that we possess of his interest in a question which in later years was to become one of the burning passions of his life. For this reason, as well as for the clear enunciation of the principle upon which Union must ultimately be established, the passage is worthy of quotation :

“This brings me to another point on which I feel almost as strongly. It is on the divisions of the Church of Christ. I can never be satisfied till we have gained an organic unity. This unity will never be gained till we consent to sink differences of belief, and make Christ the foundation on which we build. The Methodist Churches are very much to blame on this point, and the Church of England also, though in a less degree. The Congregationalists are much more after my mind in this matter. We examine our candidates on *doctrines*, in fact, till a short time ago it was *doctrines* only; and they are taught to think much of *doctrine*. Now Christ did not lay that stress upon doctrine which we do. It is true that it is best to have a correct idea of theological truths, but certainly not to

split a church upon them. I. Corinthians, chapter I, verses 12 and 13 may be very well applied to the state of parties at the present day. 'Is Christ divided?' is just as fit a question to ask now as then. Were Pusey, or Wesley, or Luther, or Spurgeon baptised for you? Because one says I am of Pusey, and another I am of Wesley, and a third I am of Luther, or I am of Spurgeon. Good men all of them, but not to take the place of Christ. For myself, I don't care to be called either Methodist, or Church of England, or Protestant, or any name except Christian. What shall we think of a church like our own which objects to uniting with other bodies of Methodists? Will God bless us? For an answer look at the miserable increase of members we get every year. After filling up losses, we, a church of 190,000 members, can hardly gain 2,000 new members a year."

During the next thirty years several factors contributed to a better understanding between the Methodist Churches. Among these mention may be made of the work done by the Local Preachers' Mutual Aid Association, the efforts put forward on behalf of the National Children's Home and Orphanage, collaboration on the part of college tutors in the training of students for the Ministry, joint activities through committee meetings, pulpit interchanges, articles in the different denominational weeklies, united efforts on public platforms and in the open air. In 1904 representatives from several of the Methodist Churches co-operated in the production of a common Methodist Hymnal. In 1907 the

Methodist New Connexion, the United Methodist Free Church, and the Bible Christians, combined to form the United Methodist Church. In 1908 the various Methodist bodies published "A New History of Methodism" in which for the first time in their history the different sections in Methodism joined together to write a history of their common origin and developments, their secessions and reunions. In 1909 a Methodist Assembly was formed to promote spiritual fellowship and united action among the different branches of the Methodist family. In the official programme no reference was made to Methodist Union though it was the secret hope of those who initiated the Assembly that it would do something to foster that cause. Peake attended the meetings, contributed an important paper on "The Verification of Revelation in Experience," and wrote an appreciative though somewhat cautious letter to *The Methodist Times*:

"I was delighted with the Methodist Assembly. The quality both of the papers and discussions was maintained at a very high level, the tone was admirable, the spirit of unity and brotherhood all that one could desire. The movement thus happily initiated must be carried forward, not merely by another Assembly, to be held in due course, but by local gatherings and by constant effort to remove the barriers which hold us apart. No good can come of any attempts to force on organic union; rather we should seek all opportunities of fellowship and co-operation that we may be prepared for an easy and natural union when the time is ripe."

In 1913 the Wesleyan Conference issued a resolution appointing a committee to consider the possibility of uniting the different branches of the Methodist Church in one church organisation. Negotiations unfortunately were interrupted by the War. At the three Conferences held in the summer of 1918, however, resolutions were passed appointing a committee to discuss the possibility of organic Church Union, and, if practicable, to submit a scheme to the Conferences of the following year. The two smaller churches passed the resolution unanimously, and at the Wesleyan Conference there were only two dissentient votes. This was followed by an invitation from Sir Robert Perks to about sixty ministers and laymen from the Free Churches to lunch at the Midland Hotel, Manchester, and discuss the question in a friendly spirit. Peake attended the lunch and spoke on behalf of the Primitive Methodist Church.

During the early part of the campaign Peake's chief task consisted in expounding his six reasons why Methodist Union should become part of the recognised policy of the Methodist Churches.

1. He was convinced from his study of the New Testament that Union was the will of Christ. Separation might sometimes be a positive duty, as in the case of the Reformation, but grave was the responsibility and heavy the guilt of those who made it inevitable. It was Christ's ideal for His Church that it should be one both in spirit and in organisation.

"We have never taken sufficiently to heart the witness of the New Testament upon this point.

We are so used to splits and schisms that the present condition of things has ceased to seem scandalous, and we read the Epistle to the Ephesians or the seventeenth chapter of John with no uneasy twinges of conscience. So atrophied is our sense of the genius of our own religion that we can sometimes hear the plea that division is a good thing in itself. Nature develops by splits, we are told, as if Nature was our Bible and the New Testament had not settled the question for us. The prayer 'that they all may be one' no doubt contemplated a union of the most intimate spiritual quality, a union comparable to the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son. But it is simply throwing dust in our eyes to infer that if we are inwardly at one we need not trouble if we are outwardly separate. For how could we remain apart if we had realised so intense a spiritual union as is contemplated? But what makes the intention quite clear is that the prayer for unity, for the perfecting of the disciples into one, is for this purpose, 'that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me.' The unity must therefore be also external, something that the world can see; and if we ask why the world increasingly refuses to believe in the Divine mission of Christ, one reason is suggested by this passage, that the disunion of Christendom is the most patent fact that the world sees when it looks at the Church."—*The Primitive Methodist Leader*, April 29th, 1920.

2. Peake could see no legitimate reason why

Churches that were so similar in doctrine and in organisation should remain apart at a time when every effort was needed to stem the tide created by the triple alliance of materialism, indifference, and positive evil. It was not by nature, but by birth and upbringing that most people had become Wesleyan, Primitive, or United Methodists. Their distinctions lay largely on the surface; in the deeper loyalties they were one. They had a common message, a common experience, a common type of worship, an organisation with a fundamentally identical structure. They had the Circuit system, the grouping of Circuits in districts, and the annual Conference. Lay preaching had received a development unparalleled in Churches which had, like them, a separated ministry. They were all rooted in the Methodist spirit and in the Methodist tradition. Moreover, the divergencies that did exist would, he felt, be rendered less pernicious through being released from the local setting in which they were often confined. The different kinds of piety had something to gain from each other, and could be enriched by cross-fertilisation. It was always fatal for a Church to coddle its denominationalisms.

3. Peake felt very keenly the taunts made by the outsider that the Church had lost its power for good because it was an organisation divided against itself. His seat on the Commission conducted by the Army and Religion Enquiry had been an eye-opener in this respect. He saw that men were bewildered by the multiplicity of sects and denominational divisions, that they

could not understand the issues that kept the Churches apart, and that they were inclined to wash their hands of the whole ecclesiastical business. Too often this meant that, to use the old German phrase, they 'threw the baby out with the bath-water.' Their disgust at sectarianism killed their interest in religion.

"The men who faced the grim realities of life and death on the battlefield are in no mood to be patient with our sectarian spirit and they bid us set our own house in order before we preach a League of Nations. Their unsophisticated instinct goes straight to the centre, and they will have little use for Churches which, already discredited by their past ineffectiveness, dwell with complacency on their qualities and are blind to the signs of the times."—Notes for an article on "Methodist Union: Practicable and Urgent."

4. Peake was certain that the evangelisation of England would receive a new impetus if the Methodist Churches could lead a united attack against the forces of evil. He believed that the ignorance in which the masses dwelt was in no small degree due to the fact that the Christian religion had so many sects to expound it. He believed, too, that the real weakness of the Church, especially as it affected its young people, was being masked by the policy of division. Each Church had its own constituency; it took it for granted that other Churches had theirs; it had no means accordingly of knowing how vast was the number of those who were outside the Churches altogether. Above all, he believed

that the Reunion of the Churches would enable them to mobilise their forces as one mighty army and to direct their resources with far greater economy of effort and singleness of aim. This in its turn would produce an overwhelming impression on the masses.

5. Peake realised that there was a big movement in the direction of Union in many departments of life. In view of this centripetal tendency it was necessary that the three Methodist Churches should if possible combine their forces. The striking success of Methodist Union in the Colonies had won the applause of its stoutest opponents. The fact that the United Methodist Church had shown no tendency to regret the Union of 1907 had been a valuable object lesson at home. On every hand good Christian people were seeking to break down the fences that kept them apart. They felt a keen dissatisfaction with vague aspirations for unity and pious professions of fraternity that did not move towards definite Reunion. The principle of Reunion indeed was in the air, and Peake could not understand how anyone who was seeking to know the mind of Christ could be indifferent to such spontaneous movements in the Church.

6. He was confident that Methodist Union was the first move towards the Reunion of Christendom. The Methodist Churches, he felt, were in the enviable position of being able to take the next step in this direction. Those who feared that Methodist Union would hinder the larger Union were making a serious blunder. The Anglican Church would rather negotiate

with one Methodist Church than with three separate branches of it.

"I am interested in Methodist Union for its own sake, but also because I believe it to be contributory to the larger Union. No one who realises the situation will, I think, doubt that the difficulties which Methodist Union presents are slight in comparison with those which confront us in the larger task. The fundamental fact to bear in mind is that the Church of England will not imperil its chances of Reunion with the Orthodox Church, and anyone who knows what the Eastern Churches will demand before they will consent to Reunion will understand how steep is the path of those who are working for Reunion at home. Moreover, the judgment of some of the most authoritative leaders in the Anglican Church, is, to my personal knowledge, quite definitely that Methodist Union will promote rather than hinder the Reunion of English Christendom. Their view may suffer from lack of intimate knowledge of internal conditions, but it gains from the detachment which puts things in a truer perspective."—*The Methodist Times*, June 22nd, 1922.

In the conduct of negotiations there were certain principles that guided Peake in his policy and that made him a powerful advocate in the cause of Reunion. When the situation reached a deadlock because each party wanted to have its own way he would urge the duty of surrendering prejudice to principle and would indicate the ways in which this could be done. When his opponents brought forward their resolutions asking

that negotiations should be broken off he would remind them that no one had any moral right to put a stop to the proceedings until the District Synods and the Quarterly Meetings had been given an opportunity to express their opinion. When his friends were tempted to grow impatient in the struggle because the progress made was so slow he would beg them not to incur the responsibility of turning the scheme down. If the great refusal had to be made let it never be said that it was the Primitive Methodist Church that had made it. When people expressed the fear that local feelings might be trampled under-foot in what was felt to be the larger interests of the United Church he would explain that the Union that he contemplated was one in which the greatest elasticity consistent with the fundamentals of the faith would be granted to the uniting parties. It would be faithful to the truths once for all delivered to the saints, yet cordial in its welcome of all the new truth into which the Holy Spirit should lead the Church.

During the second part of the campaign Peake's main work lay in answering the criticisms brought forward by the opponents of Union. These criticisms gradually grew in strength and magnitude so that between 1920 and 1925 he was compelled to devote much of his time to their consideration. The crucial questions over which the battle was waged were: (1) the Doctrinal Standards of the Church, (2) the prerogatives and responsibilities of the Ministry, and (3) the place and administration of the Sacraments. On all these issues Peake gave

leading to His Church, not only as a member of the Methodist Union Committee, but also through speech and article.

(1). Grave fears had been expressed with regard to the advisability of including Wesley's Notes and Sermons in the Doctrinal Standards of a modern and progressive Church, and it is not too much to say that Peake's articles in *The Primitive Methodist Leader* did a great deal to remove what threatened to become a serious obstacle. The religious press hailed his articles as "historic."

Peake confesses that he would have preferred the omission of any reference to the Notes and Sermons, declares that he abominates the dead hand of the past, sympathises with the loyalty felt by the Wesleyans for their great founder, and reminds Primitive Methodists that they are even more fettered in their doctrinal statement than the Wesleyans since it not only includes the Notes and Sermons, but also inserts eleven articles of faith, which are in some cases hopelessly obsolete, and which will be discarded in the United Church. He appeals for a spirit of give and take, and expresses his conviction that the difficulties in the way have been over-estimated.

The Standards do not commit the preacher to all the doctrines contained in the "Notes," but only to those doctrines that are definitely evangelical. Wesley's concern was not for the formulating of an abstract and metaphysical creed, but for the preaching of a positive and redemptive message. Moreover, the Standards need not be held in precisely the same form

in which they were stated by Wesley in the eighteenth century. The insertion of the words "generally contained" is to meet this obvious criticism. Perfect freedom is therefore given to the preacher to recognise that he is living in the twentieth century, and that new light is streaming in from many quarters. Furthermore, the statement claims that these doctrines are based upon the Divine revelation recorded in the Holy Scriptures. Such an assertion is valuable because it puts the Bible in its right place. The preacher is not committed to everything in Scripture, but only to the Divine revelation contained in it. The Standards, too, it must be remembered, are intended for preachers and are not imposed upon private members. Preaching with the commission and under the authority of a Church can never be a private enterprise. It implies an honourable understanding that does not permit a man to act as a free lance. He is guaranteed to his congregation by the Church that has placed him in her pulpits. The Church may wisely trust her preachers with a large liberty and treat them with a generous confidence, but an obligation no less sacred is binding on the preacher that he shall not strain this confidence unduly, or ever forget that he speaks as the mouthpiece of his Church. Nor must it be forgotten that the determination of the doctrine of the Church rests with the Conference, and that this Assembly in the United Church will not be in any way reactionary. Here the decisive point is to be found in the fact that the theological

professors, who have charge of the future ministry, are almost entirely progressives, loyal to the fundamental principles of the faith, but in no sense narrow or immovable. Those who are afraid of a strong conservative element on the part of the Wesleyan section in the Conference are not just to the mother Church, for the Wesleyan Conference itself has recently defined its position with regard to the Standards in a carefully worded and well-balanced statement. It denies that the Sermons and Notes are intended to impose a system of formal or speculative theology on Methodist preachers, and it gives full recognition to the continuous guidance of the Holy Spirit vouchsafed to the living Church. Above all, the Standards bring before us the great principles of the evangelical faith and the saving truths that must be prominent in our message. Time has brought vast and revolutionary changes with it, and inevitably systems of theology must suffer modification. But there is a changeless essence, which persists through all the varied forms in which it appears, and it is to this abiding element, the heart and nerve of the Gospel, that we are committed. We belong to a great past as well as to an important future, and it is necessary that we should not despise our relationship with the past as some progressives are inclined to do. A Church cannot live on its instincts. Theology is not a luxury with which it can safely dispense but a necessity that is essential to the fulfilment of its task.

(2). When it came to the Ministry the two

smaller Churches were afraid of sacerdotalism while the larger Church feared that the position of the minister might be degraded to that of a paid agent. In the former case the difficulty lay with the Pastoral Session; in the latter case it centred round the ministerial office.

In Primitive Methodism there is no organisation composed exclusively of ministers, and in the earlier stages of the debate Peake was not attracted to the idea of a Pastoral Session. He determined, however, to investigate the matter with an open mind. The result was that he gave his benediction to the institution partly because the Wesleyans were not prepared for Union unless they could keep it, partly because the Wesleyan laymen as well as the ministers were emphatic with regard to its value, and partly because in the larger Conference some kind of devolution would be necessary. Experience had also taught that the Representative Session should come before the Pastoral Session. Peake is careful to point out that the spirit that lay behind the Wesleyan attitude was not the spirit of the stronger dictating terms to the weaker. It was rather that the Wesleyans had found the Pastoral Session so valuable an element in the life of their Church not only from the administrative, but also from the spiritual standpoint that they were not prepared to abandon it even if the refusal nullified all hope of Union. He assures his Primitive Methodist friends that there is no tinge of sacerdotalism about the office, reminds them of the difficulty that they themselves experience in retaining their lay

delegates for the whole of their own Conference, and prophecies even greater difficulties when it comes to the United Church with larger commitments at home and abroad, and with delegates drawn more and more from the ranks of Labour. Under such circumstances some form of devolution will be compulsory, though it must not be a devolution that will fetter or compromise the policy of the Church by allowing the Pastoral Session to be the first in the field. The full body of ministers and laymen must be in at the commencement.

In dealing with the ministerial office Peake strongly resented the view that the Wesleyan Church had a higher conception of its ministry than the Primitive Methodist or United Methodist Churches. When he heard it explained in the early days of the Union Committee that the Wesleyans did not regard their ministers as the "paid agents of the Church," he asked himself in amazement what Methodist people entertained so grovelling a view of its ministry. It was, with more than half-a-century's experience of Primitive Methodism, being himself a minister's son, entirely unknown to him. The description of the ministry as the highest calling open to man, the most sacred vocation that he could follow, one not to be taken save on the warrant of a divine call authenticated by the call of the Church, all that was familiar to him. But the Wesleyan charge that Primitive Methodists regarded their ministers as "paid agents" was for him simply monstrous.

"If any Wesleyan is in such ignorance of

the principles on which our conception of the ministry rests, then it is high time that he began to learn, and from no tainted source, the real truth about us. I repudiate with hot indignation, as one whose life is dedicated to the training of the ministry, the opinion that we value it so lightly. But I reiterate that we cannot safely define the ministry until we have cleared our minds with reference to the Church. It is possible to elevate the office by contrast as some non-Methodist Churches have done ; to depress the laity that the ministry may be exalted. Be it ours to have a high doctrine of the ministry just because we have a high doctrine of the Church, to regard the ministry not as possessed of any priesthood which it does not share with the laity, but to recognise that that priesthood finds its fittest organ and most intense expression in the activities of those who are wholly dedicated to its service. If anyone thinks of a grace different in quality, which is not the possession of the whole priestly body, I repudiate this as wholly at variance with the New Testament teaching on the Church. And in this I rejoice to believe that the vast body of Wesleyan opinion is with me."—*The Primitive Methodist Leader*, June 8th 1922.

(3). When it came to the question of the Sacrament the three churches were anxious to guard against slovenliness on the one hand and to secure reasonable frequency of administration on the other hand. Peake preferred that the service should be conducted by a minister partly because conduct by a minister conformed

to the normal practice of Christendom, partly because the minister stood in the more responsible position, and partly because he was more likely to carry the service through without striking a jarring note than the layman who was much less accustomed to it. At the same time he was aware of no New Testament evidence why a layman should not perform this office when it was impossible for a minister to be present. In the small country churches which were only visited by a minister on rare occasions he felt that it was most important that some such arrangement should be made, and advocated that laymen should be set aside by the Church for this purpose. It was, however, he maintained, indispensable that the layman should act as the representative of the Church. While there was no doubt a practical convenience in appointing the local preacher who was planned for the Sunday, he deprecated very strongly any regulation which limited the range of selection to local preachers, believing that the duty was even more closely allied to the work of the Class leader.

It must not be forgotten that there were times when the opposition of the Wesleyan Church became ominous. At one point in the proceedings over 800 Wesleyan ministers signed a manifesto against Union. Peake, however, did not forget that the same kind of opposition had been brought against Union in the Colonies, and that when the final vote was taken it had been defeated. He also noticed that the leaders of the opposition in England had been vague

and incorrect in a number of their statements. He attacked the manifesto in a lengthy article which was printed in all the Methodist papers demanding that the charges made by the opposition should be substantiated or withdrawn. His criticisms made a deep impression and a large number of the most eminent Wesleyans associated themselves with him in his repudiation of the document.

During the last stages of the campaign Peake's chief contribution consisted in putting the final touches to the scheme for Methodist Union, and in keeping the patience and good temper of his Church at a time when negotiations were becoming long and wearisome in the face of Wesleyan opposition.

In the summer of 1925, the scheme for organic Union having been submitted to the District Synods and to the Quarterly Meetings of all three Churches, a report of results was given, and the matter referred to all three Conferences for their sanction. It was, however, understood that no Union should take place unless a majority of seventy-five per cent. could be secured at each Conference. Excellent votes were obtained in the Primitive Methodist and United Methodist Conferences, the vote in the Primitive Methodist Conference, where Peake moved the resolution in support of Union, giving a majority of over 93 per cent. in favour of the scheme. Unfortunately, however, when it came to the Wesleyan Conference the vote fell short of the required percentage. It was decided to refer the scheme back to the Drafting Committee

for further consideration and to bring the matter up again at the Conferences of the following year.

Accordingly, in 1926 the subject of Methodist Union was again discussed at the Primitive Methodist Conference held at Manchester. The Drafting Committee had decided to adopt two amendments in the interests of conciliation and goodwill. The first was of a doctrinal nature and sought to express the claim which Methodists felt that they had in the heritage of the great Catholic Church as indicated in the Apostolic and the Nicene Creeds. The second was of an administrative character and was designed to secure a larger liberty and a more frequent observance in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The previous year it had been decided that for the time being the three Churches should continue their present practice with regard to the administration of the Sacrament. It was now agreed to adopt the suggestion that had been recommended by Peake. If no minister could be present at the service the Quarterly Meeting was empowered to select a suitable layman, who need not necessarily be a local preacher, to administer the elements. The Committee requested that the two amendments might be included in the text of the Enabling Bill, and stated that it had refused to have a contracting-out clause inserted in the Bill because it hoped that all who had hitherto opposed Union would now eventually come into the United Church.

In moving the two amendments Peake explained

to the Conference that he had himself had the privilege of drafting them. He had been deeply impressed by the idea of continuity in the Church. He did not like to feel that he was simply a member of a modern movement that had grown up in British Christianity a little over a century ago. He preferred to think that his Church had a place in the Holy Catholic Church, and he was not willing that those words should be appropriated by any section of the Church as though they were a monopoly. The amendment did not pledge them to the Creeds as such. The Committee had put their doctrinal view in the most cautious way, loyally accepting the fundamental principles of the Creeds, but not necessarily interpreting every principle as their authors might have interpreted it. They stood by the reformers of the fourth and fifth centuries. The importance of the amendment lay in the fact that it would bring the new Methodist Church into line with the whole Catholic Church in its great affirmations. Peake also claimed that he was a strong supporter of the principle known as the priesthood of all believers. Herein lay the value of the second amendment. He was anxious to see the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper lifted into a higher and more important place in the life of the Church. This, however, was an almost impossible ideal at a village church on a wide circuit, which perhaps received only one ministerial appointment in six months, unless the administration of the Sacrament could in such cases be entrusted to the laity. It was

necessary to find a formula that would satisfy all the opposing parties and he hoped that such a formula had been found. The important thing was to guard against irreverence and slovenliness in administration. On the vote being taken the amendments were approved by 168 to 9, and 172 to 9 respectively.

In introducing the main resolution definitely committing the Conference to the principle of Union, Peake took for his text, "Now is the accepted time." He pointed out that a critical moment had been reached in the history of Methodist Union negotiations. The hour had struck when the Churches must decide either for or against Union. Many important matters in his own Church were being held in abeyance and many local schemes for extension were pending the decision of this question. It was necessary that they should know where they stood, and know now, not at some future date. In considering the disappointing result given by the vote in the Wesleyan Synods there were several things that the audience must bear in mind. It was obviously difficult for those in one Church fully to appreciate the currents that ran and clashed in another Church. The vote had been taken at a difficult time when the country was torn and confused by a General Strike. It is the duty of a Church to be true to its convictions and not allow its policy to be deflected from what it believes to be right. Therefore the policy of their own Church was clear. While some in the Conference might feel that their ardour had been chilled they

needed to remember that if there was a Wesleyan minority there was also a Wesleyan majority, and that the leaders of the Wesleyan Church were relying upon the Primitive Methodist Conference to give them its loyal support. It would be a tragedy if the Wesleyans were compelled to say that Primitive Methodism had turned its back upon its previous policy, and had betrayed the trust that the other Churches had reposed in it. Union was the will of Christ, and was necessary to the highest interests of His Kingdom. Its accomplishment would have a great moral effect upon the whole country. Division meant weakness and not strength. Above all, there could be little hope for Union on a larger scale if three Churches that were so alike could not agree. The strategic position held by the Methodist Churches was one of momentous importance not only for their own Church but for the Church at large. The Primitive Methodist Conference had been presented with a God-given possibility to kindle such religious enthusiasm as was certain to follow a Union of Methodism. He hoped that all three Conferences would give an unequivocal answer so that all would know where they stood.

Other speeches followed, and on the vote being taken it was found that 167 had voted in favour of Union and 26 against. The smallness of the minority, after eight years of agitation on the part of the opposition, was indeed a remarkable tribute not only to Primitive Methodism, but also to the untiring patience of those who had guided her policy during

those years. Unfortunately the Wesleyan Conference again failed to obtain the majority agreed upon, and the matter was again deferred till the following year.

At the Primitive Methodist Conference held at Leicester in 1927, arrangements were made for another debate on Methodist Union. Fears had been expressed that such a debate would not arouse sufficient interest to sustain an animated discussion. Such fears, however, proved to be groundless. A packed Church, a tense atmosphere, an opposition cool and calm in its temper, prepared the way for a keen and eager encounter. To Peake had been entrusted the difficult task of moving the resolutions committing the Conference to the principle of Union. He made it clear from the start that divisions in the Church were not a help but a hindrance when it came to Christian advance. Unity in the spirit of Christ must be matched with unity in the Body of Christ. As far as Methodism was concerned he hoped that the day was at hand when his appearance at Conference to advocate the policy of Union would no longer be a hardy annual. He himself was optimistic. They were pushing on with the machinery as rapidly as they could. They had, however, reached a point at which a false step would be exceedingly dangerous. It would be possible to help the opposition by becoming impatient. They must not give the Wesleyan Conference the idea that they were holding a pistol at its head. That would be to play into the hands of their opponents.

If the present movement failed he would despair of any successive movement. The momentous fact, too, must be faced that people outside the Church could not understand what kept the Churches apart even when the grounds of separation were explained to them.

The opposition made great play with the fact that 40 per cent. of the ministers in the Pastoral Session of the Wesleyan District Synods had voted against Union and ridiculed the idea of a lover bringing 60 per cent. of himself to his betrothed. On the vote being taken, however, 190 voted in favour of Union and 22 against. On the Enabling Bill and the Model Deed the voting in each case was 189 for, and 16 against. The fight for Union in the Primitive Methodist Conference had ended once more in a magnificent victory.

The spirit of the discussion was excellent. There was no lack of firmness on the one hand nor any sign of impatience on the other. The atmosphere of the debate was admirably expressed by Dr. J. A. Hutton in an interlude in his Conference sermon when he said :

"I think the patience and the goodwill of the corporate body of Primitive Methodists will be quoted as the classical example in all future Church Unions."

Once again, however, the Wesleyan Conference failed to reach the necessary majority, and the matter was again postponed for another year.

In 1928, the subject of Methodist Union came up at the Primitive Methodist

Conference for the tenth time. Peake's speech was firm but delivered in an excellent spirit. He spoke of the work of conciliation that had been done during the past year, the difficulties that had been removed, the prominent leaders of the opposition who had been won to their side. He put as forcibly as he could the main points which the Conference had to consider: the failure of the Wesleyan Conference to secure the required majority, the declared policy of the Wesleyan Conference to continue with the scheme, the suggestions put forward by the former Wesleyan opposition, and the approval of the leaders of the Wesleyan Church based on the faith that this policy would secure Union. The policy included the consummation of Union by three stages and meant that the uniting Conference could not be held until 1932. Peake believed that there were reasons for delay, and did not feel so strongly on the point as some of his colleagues. Delay was worth while if greater success was thereby ensured. He appealed for a spirit of trust. The "Stand no more nonsense" attitude was not worthy of a great Church. He showed clearly that under some circumstances there might be a limit to his patience. But he believed in the Wesleyan Church. The plea to take long views was to some extent misunderstood, but was altogether sane. They were legislating for posterity. He was concerned about the young people. They ought to know nothing about Primitive

Methodism, Wesleyan Methodism, or United Methodism as we know them to-day. There was one tense moment in his speech when a silence that could be felt crept over the Conference. After referring to the failure of the Wesleyan Conference to secure the 75 per cent. vote, he said that if again the Wesleyan Conference turned down the Enabling Bill the situation would be grave almost beyond description.

On the vote being taken it was discovered that 175 had voted in favour of the plan of procedure suggested and 22 against. Once more the Primitive Methodist Conference had led the way to what seemed to many to be a wonderful and astonishing victory. After a delay of ten years it could register a vote indicating a majority of nearly of 89 per cent. in favour of Union. How much of this was due to the patience and statesmanlike leadership of Peake no one will ever be able to tell. The same year the Wesleyan Conference succeeded in obtaining the necessary majority, and early in 1929 Peake was appointed along with a number of other leading Methodists, ministerial and lay, to give evidence before the Parliamentary Committee of the House of Commons in connexion with the Methodist Union Enabling Bill. His death in the August of that year, however, prevented him from witnessing the consummation of one of the Causes that lay nearest to his heart.

The value of Peake's work in connection with Methodist Union has been well summed

up by Dr. W. F. Howard in the *The Holborn Review*, January, 1930 :

"Writing as a Wesleyan Methodist I must testify to the great influence which Dr. Peake's handling of the Union question had upon many in my own Church. There were not a few on our side who feared that the two smaller Churches, in their traditional dislike of clericalism, would hold in too light esteem elements in our usage which our own experience has shown to be of utmost value in the development of a strong and healthy churchmanship. Others of our number hesitated to press for a high doctrine of the Church lest they might seem to be advocating sacerdotalism—a heresy as repugnant to Wesleyans as to Primitive Methodists. It was here that Dr. Peake's lofty conception of the Christian Society raised us up above the comparatively petty differences of denominational custom and usage. As he expounded the New Testament doctrine of the Church he drew together men of diverse temperaments and traditions. If reunited Methodism holds up to the world in its teaching about the Body of Christ the noble doctrine which Paul set forth in the Epistle to the Ephesians, we shall owe this more to Dr. Peake than to any other man."

CHAPTER VI
THE REUNION OF CHRISTENDOM

Peake's concern for Reunion was in no way limited to Methodist Union. Methodist Union was simply the first step towards the Reunion of Christendom, and Peake looked forward to a day when all who professed and called themselves Christians would be brought into one common fold. With this aim in view he gave himself without stint to the work that was being done by the Federal Council of the Evangelical Free Churches and by the Committee appointed to deal with the Lambeth Appeal to All Christian People. He believed that the Church of England held the key to the situation, and was convinced that a Union between the Anglican and the Free Churches was one of the first steps that would have to be taken after Methodist Union had been established. At the same time he appreciated the difficult position in which the Anglican Church was placed. If she had affinities with the Lutheran, the Reformed, and the Evangelical Churches, she also had affinities with the Eastern, and the Latin Churches. This meant that those who were anxious for the Reunion of Christendom at home were compelled to consider the problem from an œcumenical standpoint. The most significant fact about

the Lambeth Report as far as Methodism was concerned was not, he felt, the appeal addressed to the Free Churches of England, but what was said about the relation that existed between the Anglican Church and the Orthodox Churches. The Church of England was prepared to do nothing that would imperil her chances of Reunion with the Greek and Latin Churches. At the same time Peake was equally emphatic that the Free Churches in England ought to do nothing that would cut them off from non-Episcopalian Churches in other countries. The œcumenical principle must hold good in both cases.

There were some in the Anglican Church who were looking wistfully in the direction of Rome. Peake was convinced that such wistful looks would prove vain because Rome had herself blocked the way with her doctrine of infallibility, and with her definite assertion that those who sought Union with her must start with submission to the Roman Church as the one and only Church of Christ on earth. Such a claim to infallibility was not only repugnant to the majority in the Anglican Church, but was also based upon assumptions that had the slenderest foundation in actual history. Referring to Rome's claims in his address as President of the National Free Church Council, Peake said :

"It is suspended by a chain of hypotheses of which very few are raised above a narrow margin of probability, while several are improbable in the last degree. If Matthew,

chapter 16, verse 18, is authentic; and if by the 'rock' Peter is intended; and if the passage implies the infallibility of Peter; and if Peter ever resided in Rome; and if residing there he was its Bishop; and if he passed on his prerogatives to later Bishops of Rome; and if he did not pass them on to the Bishops in other places where he resided; if indeed there was any monarchical episcopate in Rome till decades after his time; and if the explicit utterances of Jesus did not forbid such a claim; and if it were not incompatible with much in the New Testament record—then, and only then, could one concede the Roman claim."

The only thing that would make Reunion with Rome possible would be a drastic repentance on her part. Of this, however, there was as yet no sign.

"If, inspired by a new and sweet humility and a regard for the results of unfettered exegesis and historical research, Rome should renounce her claims to supremacy, her boast of infallibility; if she would revoke all her profane anathemas, repent before the world of her ghastly record of atrocious persecution, and undertake a drastic reform from within, how gladly we should welcome such a triumph of Divine grace! But Divine grace does not act without the co-operation of the human will; and the will for so splendid a recantation, or indeed any recognition that she owes it to humanity, is, we must judge, entirely absent."
—*Ibid.*

With those in the Anglican Church who were looking towards the East, Peake had more sympathy. Here he felt that Reunion, though not quite so difficult, was nevertheless a very distant and a very uncertain event. The Eastern Church considered herself to be the one and only true Church, though she did not stand aloof from discussion with other Churches that did not accept this claim, nor was she dominated by any idea corresponding to that of Papal Supremacy. She did, however, lay enormous stress upon the orthodox faith as she interpreted it, and was not prepared to accept any Union that did not start from the standpoint of dogmatic unity. This involved the acceptance of the Seven General Councils as infallible and irreformable, the Seven Sacraments, the Eucharistic offering for the living and the dead, priestly absolution, the change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, which is to be adored by the faithful, a place in her worship for the cult of the Virgin and the saints with petitions for their intercession. It was clear to Peake that the Church of England had a long way to go before she could be brought up to such a standard. There had entered into British Christianity, including the Church of England, a solid body of Protestant opinion which was not likely to move in this direction. Moreover, the position had recently been strengthened by the liberalising tendency that had taken place among the Evangelical party in the Church of England. In the past

the Evangelicals had almost irretrievably lost their influence through their obscurantism and foolish tactics. Their recognition, however, that criticism had come to stay, and that theology must take account of modern thought and investigation, had done much to restore their prestige, and such prestige would not be used to favour Union with the East. The Eastern Church did, however, recognise a principle technically known as Economy. By this principle the Church was permitted to use discretion in matters that did not belong to dogma and were not governed by œcumenical Canons. The economic recognition of Anglican Orders would, Peake felt, bring the Churches nearer together and be the first step towards Reunion. The next move would be the drawing up of a statement of doctrine which, if signed by some thousands of the Anglican clergy, might secure economic recognition too. The question would then arise as to how far this statement of doctrine would accord with Free Church principles. In all probability it would be too sacerdotalist and sacramentarian to admit of acceptance. In spite of this conviction, however, Peake was anxious to pay tribute to the generous attitude shown by the Orthodox Church at the Lausanne Conference, of which he was a member, and did so in his Editorial Notes for *The Holborn Review* in October, 1927:

“However impenetrable their position may appear, it is not by any means to be taken for granted that their attendance at the

Council will have been without result. They cannot have been brought into such intimate contact with the representatives of other communions without gaining a truer insight into their position and feeling the impact of their religious temper. Their hearts have also been deeply touched by the splendid generosity shown to the victims of Turkish and Bolshevik ferocity. Such an exhibition of practical Christianity must have made a deep impression. Nor ought we to take it for granted that the Eastern theologians will abide by their immovable attitude. The tremendous upheaval through which Western Christianity passed at the Reformation has had no parallel in the East. But with the shrinkage of the world and the frequent contact between peoples it is not likely that the Eastern Churches can remain in their spiritual and intellectual isolation. The solvent of modern thought and criticism cannot fail to affect them; and we may hope that they may escape into a larger freedom without the catastrophic upheaval which has cost Western Christianity so dear."

In leaning towards the Eastern Church instead of towards the English Free Churches Peake felt that the Anglican Church was throwing away a real possibility for a very distant prospect. She must remember, too, that the more a Church strains towards the Right the more difficult it becomes for it to reach an agreement with the Left.

In his contemplation of Union between the Anglican and the Free Churches Peake

was chiefly concerned with the questions that centred round Episcopacy, Ordination, the Church, the Ministry, the Sacraments, and Disestablishment. On all these issues he expressed his opinion in his address as President of the National Free Church Council.

Peake recognised that the Anglican Church would never surrender Episcopacy, partly because a large number within the Anglican Church regarded it as essential, and partly because by so doing it would snap one of its most important links with the Roman and the Eastern communions. It was, however, prepared to qualify its position by the proviso that its Episcopal practice should be constitutional and not prelatical, and that it should be combined with elements of congregational and presbyteral order.

"To an Episcopate so limited, provided no theory that Episcopacy is of the essence of the Church is demanded, I should personally have no objection. Church order is for me a matter of expediency and not of principle. I could live and work happily under any form of Church order except a despotism."

Peake rejected the idea of another ordination pure and simple, because it implied that the previous ordination had not been valid. He felt that more was to be said for conditional ordination because it did not question the reality of the previous ordination, because both parties were willing to submit to the same process, and because it would reassure anxious souls that the recipient could truly effect

whatever they may believe that a minister does effect in the Eucharistic service. He thought that something was to be said for the suggestion that the mixture of rites should be avoided. Though it would make the interim period abnormally long, and would hamper that free circulation throughout the Church, which it was the object of Reunion to promote, it would have the advantage that it would probably violate no convictions. Moreover, two generations are not long in the life of a Church. Peake was convinced, however, that the problem could best be solved by a frank recognition on the part of the Anglican Church that the essence of what was conveyed in ordination was authorisation to minister in the ordaining body. Then those who were already ministers in the respective Churches would require no more than reciprocal permission to minister throughout the United Church. There would be no question as to the reality of the previous ministry; there would be simply an extension of the sphere in which the ministry could be exercised.

Peake believed that the thorniest problems of Reunion were associated with the Church, its organisation, its ministry, and its sacraments. He was convinced that the only solution was a lofty conception of each based on the teaching of the New Testament. People must, however, get away from the idea that because an institution is primitive it is necessarily right. No form of organisation has any intrinsic Divine right. It is for the living

Church to create its own organisation and to modify it by retrenchment here and expansion there as new conditions arise and new needs have to be met.

The Church is defined as the Body and the Bride of Christ and the Holy Temple of God. Its unity must be marred by no schism, its loyalty must be compromised by no illicit love, its altar must be desecrated by no strange fire, its obedience to its Head must be distracted by no wilfulness or self-love. Such was the noble Churchmanship of Paul; such and no meaner, says Peake, must be our own.

In defining the ministry we must always remember that while the minister has his own individual call from God his commission to exercise it comes to him through the Church. The minister cannot go over the head and behind the back of the Church to Christ. As a High Churchman, Peake viewed with deep repugnance and distrust any theory of the ministry that tended to lower the conception of the Church. The unbalanced exaltation of the ministry might lead to the depression of the laity, the denial of the universal priesthood, and the consequent depreciation of the Church as a whole. The cure for High Clericalism was High Churchmanship; the antidote to extravagant claims for a section was an exalted conception of the whole body. Nor was there any hard and fast rule dividing the ministry from the laity. The grace that worked in each operated in both. Should the

body be totally deprived of its ministry, it could always replace it out of its own resources.

In his treatment of the Lord's Supper, Peake accepted the view that Jesus had instituted it to be kept as a permanent memorial, though he confessed that there were difficulties when it came to the Biblical text. He recognised the possibility of a high standard of Christian life in those communities, like the Society of Friends, who had broken away from the Sacraments, though he felt that they were not true to the intention of Scripture or to the genius of the Christian religion. He doubted, too, whether the same standard of moral and spiritual life would be maintained if all the other Christian bodies were to adopt the same attitude. He believed that Paul held a high view of the Sacrament, though for Paul the dominant thing was not the Lord's Supper, but faith. Paul was, however, profoundly concerned that the atmosphere for the Supper should be right, and that all should be done with reverence and in order. Peake himself attached a high value to the service, not, of course, because it had any magical efficacy, but because it was one of the most important ways in which the Christian could be brought into the Real Presence of Jesus.

"We joyfully recognise the Real Presence of Christ in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, for He is both the Giver and the Gift. It is His pierced hands which break for us the bread of life. It is Himself that He gives to

the believing soul. But His Presence is in the Sacrament as a whole, not localised in the elements, to which it would be better that the term Sacrament should not be applied. If this is recognised, there would in itself be no objection from a strictly Protestant point of view to taking the elements from the Lord's table to the sick. But when it is believed that the Real Presence is localised in the elements, and abides there even when the congregation of the faithful has dispersed, it is not illogical to say that Christ, actually present in the elements, may be, and indeed ought to be, adored. It is this which constitutes the peril of continuous reservation. But the Real Presence must be more spiritually interpreted, and it ought not to be regarded as different in kind from that which the Christian experiences in prayer and other acts of devotion. I do not deny that the Eucharist has its own specific value, but this is not to be found in any change which takes place in the elements themselves."

It was quite incredible to Peake that the Free Churches would ever consent to become part of an established Church. It was, however, understood that if other barriers to Reunion could be removed the Church of England would not permit Establishment to stand in the way. Peake hoped that the movement for Disestablishment would come from within, and that it would come as the result of political development rather than as the consequence of religious controversy. He

himself could not acknowledge either an established Church or an established recognition of Christianity. He believed that the State must be colour-blind to all religious differences, and that the conscience of the agnostic should be as sacred to us as our own.

"It is a part of our Christian duty to render the State our own unstinted service and loyal obedience where this does not clash with our highest loyalty. We must render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. But there is a realm where Cæsar's writ does not run, a sphere which he has no right to invade. There is and can be only one Head of the Church. The prerogatives of the ministry may have their importance; but the crown rights of the Redeemer are far more sacred to me than the rights of any ministry; they touch me to the quick. But what is the present position? The Church suffers the indignity of having, by its constitution, a secular monarch as its official head. He may be a Christian neither in belief nor practice. Charles II and George IV have stood at the head of the national Church. And if we put this indignity on the Church, we put the indignity on our sovereign of forcing him to belong to a particular Church and to different Churches in different parts of our island. He cannot freely choose the communion to which he would belong; nor can he refrain from belonging to any if his personal convictions are out of harmony with Christianity. We may even compel him to violate his conscience as the price of accepting

his crown. Nor can the Church be free to take unflinchingly the Christian line, since it is fettered, even though it is not paralysed, by its entangling alliance with the State. No Church can do its work aright unless it possesses complete spiritual autonomy. It cannot allow the secular power to determine its beliefs, its organisation, or the form of its worship. But if a Church has secured autonomy, it ought not to seek to make the best of both worlds by combining it with any secular alliance conferring prerogative and prestige. It is to be trusted that all the Churches may become more Christian. This will create a spirit of love, which will make it intolerable to any established Church to remain in a position of privilege in relation to the State which differentiates it from other Churches."

In his estimate of the Conference at Lausanne, which he wrote for *The Holborn Review* in October, 1927, Peake expressed his belief that the Conference had been an education to the Church of England. The Anglican representatives had had a great shock when they saw the small place that their Church filled outside England. Peake believed that this would have a wholesome effect. No Anglican would be able to take a mean view of Methodism when he turned his eyes from Great Britain to the Methodist Churches with their teeming millions across the waters.

But Peake recognised that there were deeper difficulties that were standing in the way of Reunion and of Christian advance. It was

necessary that the Church should turn her eyes to her dominions beyond the seas, that she should exercise a private judgment in no way drugged and dragooned by autocratic authority, that she should rise above the thinness and poorness of her religious life, that she should receive a new vision of God and of His purpose for the world as it has been revealed in His Son, Jesus Christ.

"Our own deepest trouble is not obscurantism, but anæmia, the thinness and poorness of spiritual life. In the records of the early Church we are impressed by the radiant joy, the infectious enthusiasm, the glowing hope, the ardent affection of those early days. Can we match that sense of liberation, that intoxicating rapture, that deep central bliss? The problem is not simply that of making Christians, but of making Christians of the best and highest type. And for this the loftiest morality is not enough. Religion is not just morality touched with emotion. It is the most tremendous force we know. When it bursts into life in all its explosive energy the fountains of the great deep are broken up. Or it may steal into the life as the dawn into the world, and, without crisis, brighten to the perfect day. But it is tragic when the light at noonday is only a stereotyped dawn. Far too many Christians seem as if they had been vaccinated against any profound experience of religion by too weak an inoculation. If religion is anything in our lives it ought to be everything; not in the sense that it shuts

out all other interests, but that it supplies the underlying harmony to every melody of life. But we search too little among the roots of our religion ; we live too much on the shallow crust, too little at the fiery centre."

In promoting the cause of Reunion, Peake attached great importance to the work done by the Federal Council of the Evangelical Free Churches, which he regarded as the Parliament of the Free Churches, and whose meetings he attended with the utmost regularity. He was equally enthusiastic with regard to the work done in connexion with the Lambeth Appeal, and this chapter can fittingly close with a tribute to his memory from the Archbishop of Canterbury, and with a letter that the Archbishop wrote to Mrs. Peake at the death of her husband.

" As a result of the Appeal to All Christian People issued by the Lambeth Conference of 1920, prolonged and intimate conferences took place at Lambeth Palace from 1922 to 1925 between six representatives of the Church of England appointed by the Archbishops and six representatives appointed by the Federal Council of Evangelical Free Churches. I had the honour of being chairman, and Professor Peake was one of the most constant and valuable members. I was thus happily drawn into very close association with him. I was greatly impressed by the spirit of Christian charity and understanding which he always showed. He was as ready to understand and appreciate

the attitude of others as he was clear and decided about his own. Even if he disagreed with an opinion offered by others he always tried to put the most, not the least, favourable construction upon it. Sometimes when his colleagues were impatient about things that were said, he would try to explain and interpret those things to them in a favourable light. This Christian spirit never failed. It seemed to be the atmosphere in which he thought and spoke. It must have come from a constant inward loyalty to Christ Himself. How could I fail to feel towards such a man not only esteem and admiration but even affection?

COSMO CANTUAR."

3rd February, 1930.

"LAMBETH PALACE, S.E.1.
22nd August, 1929.

"DEAR MRS. PEAKE,

Forgive me if I dictate this letter. It is the only way in which I can deal with my correspondence, and my words are not less sincere because they are spoken rather than written with my own hand.

I cannot tell you how grieved I was to read of the death of your husband, and I must send you this message of my heartfelt sympathy. I had the greatest esteem and indeed affection for him. We were, as you know, thrown very closely together for some years in the Conferences which were held, and over which I presided at Lambeth on the great though difficult theme

of Christian Union. Of all those who took part in these conferences he was the one who seemed most anxious, while maintaining his own principles, to understand and sympathise with the point of view of others. Again and again at difficult moments it was his openness of mind and breadth of brotherly sympathy which enabled us to continue. He seemed always to bring into these discussions, not only knowledge and sympathy, but also a quite special loyalty to the Mind of Our Lord. He has done a great work and more than most has shown how acceptance of the results of scholarship may be combined with loyalty to faith in God as revealed in Christ, and he has left the memory and example of a true Christian scholar.

You must be proud that you were able to share a life like his, but I realise the more how great your sorrow must be now. I pray that the Holy Spirit may strengthen and sustain you.

Yours in sincerest sympathy,
COSMO CANTUAR."

CHAPTER VII
DR. PEAKE AS AUTHOR

In 1897 Peake published his first book, *A Guide to Biblical Study*. It was written for those who desired to make a systematic study of the Bible. It indicates the methods that ought to be employed, and points out the problems to which the attention of the student must be directed. Passing from the Old Testament to the New it deals in turn with questions of Introduction, Exegesis, History, and Theology. Though parts of the book are now out of date, it was at the time an excellent piece of work, and one that needed to be done. Its value was enhanced by an introduction from Dr. Fairbairn, and by a chapter on the languages of the Bible from Dr. Gray.

In his opening remarks Peake reminds us that it is important to study the text of the Bible before we study the commentaries that have been written upon it. A commentary may make things so plain that we become unconscious that there are any difficulties that have to be faced. For our study of the text, Greek and Hebrew concordances are an essential.

In his chapter on "Books," Peake gives us a description of the best and most recent works with which the critical and the historical student ought to be familiar. The merits of

different volumes are fully discussed, and an attempt is made to discriminate between what is worth reading and what may be left unread. The student is warned against buying commentaries on the Bible written by one man, since the day for that kind of commentary has passed. The field of study has become so large that no single person is qualified to deal with it. The student is also warned against purchasing all the commentaries that may appear in any given series, and is advised to select only what is best in each. In making a decision the safest guide is often the name of the writer. Nor must the student think that the latest commentary is necessarily the best. Personality is more important than novelty.

In his Introduction to the books of the Old and New Testaments, Peake displays an admirable spirit in his criticism of those whose views do not coincide with his own. His warning to the critics who accepted the dismemberment of the Hexateuch but who shrank from a similar partition of the Prophets, his modest dissent from Hort and Sanday concerning the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles, his careful but undogmatic treatment of the Johannine problem, and his recognition of the value to be placed on the labours of Baur, are cases in point. While there is a deep reverence for Authority, there is an even stronger reverence for Truth.

On the question of Exegesis, Peake warns the student against the much-praised practice of interpreting Scripture by Scripture. The

Bible is not the work of a single author, and theologians must not expect to find the precepts commanded in the Gospels lying ready to hand in the laws of Leviticus. While Old Testament principles find their highest expression in the teaching of Jesus, it is an unhistorical exegesis which insists upon reading the New Testament into the Old. Nor does Peake give any quarter to the attempts that are made to interpret Scripture from an allegorical standpoint. Unlike the author of the Bampton Lectures, which were published the same year, he has no room whatever for a method of interpretation which leaves the Bible at the mercy of every fad and every caprice entertained by the exegete. Above all, the student must avoid, as he would avoid the plague, the prophetic school of interpreters whose efforts afford a melancholy spectacle of the fantastic follies produced by Anglo-Israelism and by all attempts to discover the date of the Millennium.

"It is a golden rule in the study of the Prophets to start from the principle that the Prophet's main interest is with his own time, and only when this rule is observed do the Prophets become intelligible. If we are bent on seeking after a sign, we may look for prosaic fulfilments of the prophetic visions. But it is only the incurable conceit of human nature to imagine that the Prophets had a peculiar interest in the closing years of the nineteenth century or the fortunes of the British Empire."

But the section that called for loudest praise

was the section on Paulinism in the chapter on New Testament Theology. While some criticised the amount of space devoted to the teaching of Paul compared with that devoted to the teaching of Jesus, and while others took umbrage at the suggestion that a study of the life of Jesus could best be approached through an examination of the Epistles of Paul, there can be little doubt that the clear, masterly, concatenated presentation of Paulinism is the most valuable section in the book. Dr. Marcus Dodd, writing in *The British Weekly*, says:

"Mr. Peake gives a digest of Paulinism which, however we may differ from him on one or two matters of interpretation, can only be characterized as consummately able. The familiarity which he shows with the subject, revealed in the well-digested statements he makes, and the lucidity and consistency with which he constructs the theology of Paul and exhibits it as an organic whole, must win the admiration of every reader and prompt the wish that the same hand would elaborate that chapter into a volume."

The chief criticisms levelled against the book were: the demand made upon the student to undertake a piece of work sufficient for several ordinary men, the preference given to the critical rather than the devotional interpretation of Scripture, the feeling that the critical authorities recommended belonged to the most advanced wing of critical thought, the radical advice offered with regard to the purchase of books, especially old commentaries,

the inadequate space given to alternative views as in the reference to Solomon's Song being a drama, the absence of any guide to the literature on the Apocrypha and on the Apocryphal Gospels, and the omission of any references to standard works in other languages. Most of these criticisms, however, were inevitable since they were inherent in the plan of the book. To have complied with them all would have destroyed the purpose for which it was written. Bearing this in mind we can agree with Fairbairn's statement, "When its end is contemplated its very defects become virtues."

The value of the book lay in the practical guidance that it gave to the student who wanted to discover the best things in the realm of Biblical knowledge. It told him what to look for and what to avoid. It enabled him to distinguish between what was definitely known and what still belonged to the category of the uncertain. It gave him a point of view, mapped out the course which he ought to take, threw out numerous questions calculated to stimulate the mind and make it work of its own accord, provided all the material for the finding of a solution without actually disclosing the solution itself. It was admirably suited to its purpose, and we can agree with the reviewer who wrote :

"The Bible student who has this book, and an average amount of brains, is far better equipped than hundreds who have sat under professors until grey hairs were here and there upon them."

In 1902 Peake published in *The Century Bible* his Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews. The book gives in small compass an excellent discussion of the difficult problems associated with its study. Peake holds that the letter was written for Jewish Christians who were in danger of lapsing back again into Judaism. He inclines to Zahn's view that they were a single congregation situated in a large town so that the command not to forsake the assembling of themselves together does not refer to a general abandonment of Christian worship, but to a shifting from congregation to congregation. While the question as to where this community lay has been answered differently by different scholars, Peake sets on one side the possibilities of Jerusalem, Cæsarea, Antioch, and Alexandria, and argues in favour of the view that the community was a Roman one. The evidence points to an Italian destination, and Rome seems to be the only city that fulfils all the conditions.

On the vexed question of authorship, Peake dismisses the claims of Paul, Barnabas, Luke, Clement, Silas, Apollos, and Peter. One of the best sections in the book is that in which he contrasts the theology of Paul with the theology of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The differences here are so fundamental that apart from any further evidence they definitely exclude the possibility of a Pauline authorship. In their treatment of the Law, Salvation, Faith, and Christology, the writers are poles apart.

“With Paul everything is included in union with the crucified and risen Lord, and participation in his experiences. This is the very heart of the Pauline theology, but not a trace of it is to be found in Hebrews. Christ is our Brother, who owns the ties of kinship, our Captain or Forerunner, who dedicates the way to the Holiest by His blood, by which we may follow him. He is our High Priest who offers himself to God for us, and cleanses our conscience by the sprinkling of his blood. But never do we read that he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit, or hear any echo of Paul’s immortal words: ‘I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me.’”

Peake confesses that he is strongly drawn to Harnack’s fascinating theory that the letter was written by Priscilla. The Alexandrian tinge in the Epistle may well have been derived from her connexion with Apollos, and her name may have been omitted because Paul disliked women teachers, who soon became discredited in the early Church.

The spiritual and evangelical truths of the Epistle find in Peake a sympathetic student, and his exposition is based upon a full acquaintance with ancient ritual. It was in a work of this kind that his joint claim to be both Old and New Testament scholar found its best expression. Throughout the volume he shows us very clearly that the main thesis of the author is to explain that Christianity is superior to Judaism, that it is the perfect religion,

because it belongs to the heavenly order while Judaism belongs to the earthly. Hence the material religion of the Jew must be replaced by the spiritual religion of the Christian. Its transient and materialistic angelology must be superseded by the witness of the eternal Son. Its priesthood, which is subject to death, and which depends upon physical descent for its succession, must give way to the priesthood which belongs to the order of Melchizedek, which is eternal in its character, and which depends not on physical succession but on personal worth. Its sacrifices of flesh and blood must be renounced in favour of the spiritual sacrifice made by Jesus Christ. The Old Covenant must be surrendered for the New. Christianity is the heavenly original of which Judaism is but the flickering and the insubstantial shadow. The contrast between the material and the spiritual, between Judaism and Christianity, runs through the whole Epistle, and is worked out by Peake with much fulness both in the Introduction and in the Notes.

Now this contrast between the material and the spiritual creates a serious difficulty, for the two orders which exist side by side are brought together in the realm of human life. Man is heir to all that is material, temporal, and earthly; he is also heir to all that is spiritual, eternal, and heavenly. Hence he finds that he is torn between two worlds, and that this constitutes his chief misery. The importance of the Incarnation lies in the fact that it crosses the gulf between the material and the spiritual.

Through his winning of perfection Jesus makes a spiritual atonement for sin, and by means of his death and resurrection he rends the veil which hangs between the earthly and the heavenly. Faith is the flying bridge between this world and the next. It translates its recipient into the heavenly sanctuary so that even while he is here on earth he may through Christ draw near to God, and enjoy unrestricted communion with Him.

The book received the warmest reception both in Great Britain and in the United States. The reviews were exceptionally good. *The Aberdeen Journal* hailed it as "giving evidence of much original research, extensive reading, and great independence of mind," while *The Pilgrim Teacher* exclaimed, "We have never seen a volume on this anonymous epistle which was so full of helpful and suggestive material."

In 1903 Peake witnessed the publication of his *Commentary on Colossians* in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*. The Commentary had been completed by the September of 1898, and it was a great disappointment to him that it did not see the light till five years after the authorised date. New problems are constantly emerging, and Peake always liked to feel that he was well abreast of recent scholarship. The delay, it ought to be said, was not due to the editor, but was caused by the failure of the author of the Commentary on Ephesians to deliver his manuscript by the stated time. Peake did, however, gain the advantage of being allowed to choose his own

text. The editor, W. Robertson Nicoll, had printed the "Textus Receptus" for the first two volumes, but owing to the resolute persistence of Peake, he gave permission to subsequent expositors to choose their own text, and Peake had the full benefit of this decision.

The Commentary opens with a description of Colosse, its situation, its commerce, its inhabitants. This is followed by a long and very interesting section on Angelology. Peake claims that the usual division of angels into sinless and fallen spirits was not current among the ancient Jews. The angels are simply the instruments of Yahweh's will, and they are only evil in so far as their mission is to inflict evil. They are punished for disobedience in just the same way in which the stars are punished, but immorality can no more be attributed to them than it can be attributed to the stars. The same conception is, according to Peake, entertained by Paul after his conversion. The angels to which he refers are good or bad not in virtue of their intrinsic character, but in virtue of the mission on which they are sent. It is from this standpoint that the angels of the Law are said to have brought about the death of Christ. They themselves did not owe him any personal hostility, but they were completely identified with the Law which was in opposition to Grace. The subject receives fresh and full treatment, and is enforced and illustrated by frequent references to rabbinical and apocalyptic Jewish literature.

The heretical views combated by the apostle

are ascribed to Judaism, and attempts to derive them from Gnosticism and Essenism are regarded with disfavour. The Epistle is attributed to Paul in spite of the fact that the common Pauline particles are absent, and that the Epistle contains strange words and collocations of words. It was probably written at Rome, and the date was perhaps 59 A.D.

The notes on the text are full of life and interest. The distinctions drawn between words of similar meaning are frequently emphasised in a way that is clear and suggestive. Cases in point are σοφία (wisdom) and σύνεσις (understanding) in chapter one, verse nine, ὑπομονή (patience) and μακροθυμία (longsuffering) in chapter one, verse eleven, and the combination of θρόνοι (thrones), κυριότητες (dominions), ἀρχαὶ (principalities), and ἐξουσίαι (powers), in chapter one, verse sixteen. On the much debated passage in verse twenty-four, the view is taken that the "sufferings" are the sufferings of Christ, not however, those which He endured on earth, but those which He endures in Paul through their mystical union. This point is of interest because it brought Peake to a consideration of what he always regarded as the central doctrine of Paulinism, the mystical union between Christ and the believer.

The most distinctive feature of the Commentary is to be found in the fact that it deals more with the thought of the Epistle than with a minute examination of the vocabulary. This was due partly to the fact that Lightfoot had already dealt very fully with the philological

aspect of the subject, and partly to the belief, entertained by Peake, that Paulinism must be studied as a system before any attempt is made to interpret details. To the end he declared that no commentary on this Epistle could be mentioned in the same breath as that written by Erich Haupt.

For Peake the most powerful objection to Theism was the problem of pain, and it was to help those for whom the misery of the world had become a nightmare that he wrote his *Problem of Suffering in the Old Testament*. The book was an expansion of the Hartley Lecture delivered at Carr's Lane Chapel, Birmingham, in 1904, and was dedicated to his old friend and teacher, Dr. Fairbairn. Peake traces the rise and progress of the problem of suffering from the time when the ancient Hebrews saw in it a proof of the Divine anger. There is a slow development of thought which gradually becomes common property. It resembles the choruses of an oratorio, which are for ever catching up and weaving into their structure new refrains first given to them by solo voices. The first soloist in the oratorio of pain is Habakkuk. He cannot understand why God should allow the righteous to suffer and should permit the wicked to reign in triumph. He takes comfort in the thought that though the prosperity of the wicked cannot be explained it is destined to perish. The contribution of Jeremiah is considered next. His passionate love for his people, forced into splendid isolation by those who treat him as a traitor, makes him a sad and sombre

figure. As he sits by the death-bed of his nation, he feels that God's dealings with him are like a dark riddle. Driven into intimate fellowship with God, he discovers that the essence of religion is to be found in a personal relation between himself and his Maker. From this he develops his doctrine of the New Covenant in which God writes His law on each individual heart.

With the fall of Jerusalem the problem became more acute. Israel saw in the national disaster the defeat of God's chosen people. To cheer their drooping spirits Ezekiel relates his vision of the valley of dry bones, proclaims the awful holiness of God, and asserts the doctrine of individual responsibility. There is much in his teaching which it is difficult for the Christian to appreciate, but there can be little doubt that his legalism saved the religion of Israel.

From Ezekiel we pass to the Second Isaiah with his teaching about the Suffering Servant of Yahweh. The Servant is to be identified with the historical Israel, and his significance lies in the fact that he is the revealer of Yahweh to the nations outside Israel, and the vicarious sufferer for their sin. Suffering is portrayed as a world problem, and the salvation of mankind is to be wrought through human pain. The nation, however, proved inadequate for its task which had to be completed by Jesus who concentrated in Himself the essential Israel.

After a short chapter dealing with a century of disillusion, the reader is brought to the problem as it exists in the book of Job. This is without any doubt the finest chapter in the volume.

Its dramatic power commands a breathless attention from the first word to the last. The chief lesson to be learnt is that man may be sure of the love of God even though he cannot discover any reason why he has been compelled to suffer. Human criticism of the Divine method must always remain inadequate. It is only the vision of God which can release us from the problem and which can create the inner certainty that all is well.

"To trust God, when we have every reason for distrusting Him, save our inward certainty of Him, is the supreme victory of religion. This is the victory which Job achieves."

The thought of a life beyond the grave, vaguely hinted at in the book of Job, now begins to find expression in the Psalmist and in the Apocalypticist. One Psalmist is convinced that the fate of the just must be different from the fate of the wicked, while another is certain that his communion with God is so precious that not even death itself can destroy it. Resurrection to earth to re-people a depleted land, or to administer justice to the inhabitants of Israel, is contemplated respectively by the apocalyptic passages in Isaiah and Daniel. The wail of the pessimist finds expression in the pages of Ecclesiastes where the description of life as a meaningless mockery puts with tremendous force the logic of a non-Christian position, and shows how necessary was the revelation of God in Christ.

This brings us to the final chapter. While the Old Testament provides us with helpful suggestions, the key to the mystery lies in

Christianity, which gives a deeper significance to all that the Old Testament proclaims, and provides us with an assurance of God's love which can triumph over every obstacle. The doctrine of the Trinity makes the love of God possible while the fact of the Incarnation proves that it is a reality. We are saved from pessimism by the Cross of Christ. The Cross is either the key to the riddle of the Universe or else its darkest mystery. If we believe in the Divinity of Jesus, we can believe in the goodness of God. This will not solve the problem, but it will enable us to enter into the peace of God, certain that He is love.

Three main criticisms were levelled against the volume.

Many felt that it was a drawback to the enjoyment of the book that Peake was so frequently drawn away from the problem in hand to discussions of literary and critical questions with regard to the date, authorship, and interpretation of his documents. Even those who were in full sympathy with his critical conclusions felt that the mechanism of criticism had been unduly obtruded into the book. A reviewer in *The Aberdeen Free Press*, who was warm in his appreciation of the volume, wrote:

"Criticism is good, and exegesis is good, yet to be interrupted by critical discussions in the midst of an absorbing interest in the problem of suffering in the Old Testament is not good. We find no fault with the critical work, for it is good, the work of a trained and competent man, nor do we find fault with the

discussion of the main problem, it is the mixing up of the two which is unpleasant and irksome."

Peake himself strongly repudiated this statement, and in a letter which he wrote to *The Sunday School Chronicle*, said :

"I have not consciously added a single paragraph that is irrelevant to this subject. The critical discussions of whose presence the reviewer complains as welcome to no one (though reviewers who really understand the subject have spoken of them as peculiarly welcome and valuable), are almost entirely confined to the footnotes and the appendix. There is very little in the text of the book which is not direct exposition of the teaching of the Old Testament on this subject."

The book was also criticised, this time by *The Manchester Guardian*, for its treatment of the book of Job :

"To recognise our human insignificance in a boundless creation may change our perspective, but it cannot solve a moral difficulty which springs out of the Divine healing of an individual soul, and in our reading of them there is nothing in the speeches of the Lord out of the whirlwind which even suggests a ground of moral peace. A revelation of power can never take the place of a revelation of justice. Possibly Professor Peake has been influenced unconsciously by his own Christian answer to the problem under discussion."

Peake would in the main have agreed with this criticism. He freely admits that the Old

Testament does not provide the reader with an adequate solution of the problem. It is only in the revelation that has come through Jesus Christ that we find the answer that can satisfy.

The third criticism, which was passed by several reviewers, was the attempt made by the writer to solve the problem of suffering through the introduction of the doctrine of the Trinity. *The Yorkshire Daily Observer* puts the position as well as any :

"The weak thing in this excellent book is the 'escape.' It is astounding to find the Gospel identified with the doctrine of the Trinity because that enables us to think of the divine nature as love from the beginning. The 'social' argument for the Trinity is of no use ; a person who can be the object of love is a separate being, and destroys the conception of unity ; moreover, two would serve the purpose of having subject and object in God as well as three. Professor Peake may feel assured that there is no anodyne here for thousands, who will find it very much more easily in such Old Testament words as 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.' Jesus, too, can become all that He is to the author without the metaphysical doctrine insisted upon. Apart from the light of Jesus, Professor Peake feels that 'Ecclesiastes' has said the last word on the problem of pain ! If so, then, by his own showing, the Old Testament men could do vastly better, for they found a path to peace without the help of Jesus. One cannot help feeling that

this is a little of the tyranny of tradition which the author has not yet broken."

The answer to this criticism is given by Peake in his closing chapter :

"But all this is true, only if Christianity is true, and if Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God. It is not given to me to stand where many stand, to surrender a belief in His Divinity, and yet to hold fast a faith in God's goodness. The longer I ponder the world's pain in itself, the more it seems to deny a moral government of the world, and the more I feel drawn to the conviction that on this, the greatest of all questions, Ecclesiastes has said the last word. And if I do not yield to this temptation, it is because I ponder it also in the light of the Cross, on which the Son of God manifested the eternal love."

Apart from the great doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation, apart from the darkness and the restored sunshine of Calvary, Peake knew no answer to the riddle. Only when he comes to the Cross does his spirit rest in God.

Peake's book on the Problem of Suffering had necessitated a study of the book of Job, and the following year he published his Commentary on this work. Here he was travelling along a path that had already been trodden with conspicuous success by A. B. Davidson. Davidson's Commentary, however, was now twenty years old. New problems had arisen in the meantime, and many of the old problems had taken a different form. The commentaries of Dillmann, Budde, Duhm, and Marshall, the

researches of Bickell, Siegfried, Beer, Klosterman, Cheyne, and others had cast fresh light on the book. Hence Peake felt that he was fully justified in giving a sketch of the position in 1905, seeing things through his own eyes and saying them in his own way. By his knowledge of the literature, by his grasp of the subject, and by the originality of his treatment, he soon made his Commentary indispensable.

Peake does not believe that the book of Job is historical, but declares that it would be a mistake to suppose that the story was pure romance, freely invented by the author. The drama is based upon the sufferings of a righteous man, though how much is taken from tradition, and how much is due to the author, it is impossible to say. The Satan is not the Satan of popular theology, but is a faithful minister of God, whose function is to scan the conduct of God's creatures, and who has seen so much of the seamy side of human nature that he has become somewhat cynical.

Peake accepts the integrity of the book in its main portions. He regards the present Job as working over an old tradition, the prologue and the epilogue being direct survivals of the old story. He asserts the authenticity of the prologue because apart from it the subsequent debate would be unintelligible, and he defends the genuineness of the epilogue on the ground that Job's restoration to prosperity was a dramatic necessity for a writer who had no sure belief in immortality. The most important sections assigned to later writers are the speeches of

Elihu, the eulogy on Wisdom, and the descriptions of Behemoth and Leviathan in the speeches of Yahweh. The third, and lost, speech of Zophar is discovered through a reconstruction of chapters twenty-six and twenty-seven—a suggestion which, though it commanded respect, did not everywhere carry conviction. The book is dated about 400 B.C., a date which finds support in the history of the doctrine of individualism which first received clear expression in the days of the Exile. Further confirmation as to the date is drawn from the doctrine of angels, the introduction of the Satan, the inward ethic of the book, and the late character of the diction. The author is said to be a Jew who probably lived in the south of Judæa on the edge of the wilderness. He had seen much of the suffering endured in that region, and it speaks volumes for him that, unlike the author of Ecclesiastes, he rested at last in God.

An enormous amount of close and careful work went into the preparation of this little volume. The Introduction and the Notes are packed with the results of recent research. Peake was thoroughly familiar with the voluminous literature on the book of Job. He discusses with freedom the views of modern commentators, paying most attention to those of Bickell, Budde, Dillmann, Duhm, Marshall, and Siegfried. He introduces copious notes of great value, and anyone who is fond of dipping into critical studies, ethical speculations, or archaic mythologies will find in them an inexhaustible mine of information.

But Peake's interest in critical questions in no way detracts from his investigations into the moral and spiritual problems of the book, or from his deep appreciation of its magnificent poetry. The most delightful section in the volume is concerned with the literary art of Job. It reveals Peake's appreciation of Hebrew poetry at its best. A few gems may be taken as a fair sample of his rendering of passages painted by a poet who was a master of metaphors culled from many spheres of life :

"Man's brief life is like the flower opening in beauty and suddenly cut down ; the swiftness with which it passes is illustrated by the weaver's shuttle, the courier, the speed of the light skiffs on the river, or of the eagle as it swoops on its prey. Clouds form the garment and swaddling band for the infant sea, new-born from the bowels of the chaotic deep. The dawn is a woman peeping over the crest of the hills, and the rays of light are her eyelashes. Darkness is a coverlet in which the wicked are shrouded from sight ; suddenly the light comes, and twitches the covering away, so that the wicked are shaken out of it and stand revealed in the glare of day. The caracole of the horse is compared to the leaping of a locust."

Peake always regarded this as the best of his earlier books, and some are of the opinion that it was never surpassed by anything that he did later. Along with the Epistle to the Hebrews it did much to raise the standard for the series to which it belonged.

In 1906 Peake published his *Reform in Sunday*

School Teaching. This was the outcome of a series of nine articles which he contributed to *The Primitive Methodist Leader* during the latter part of 1905. It was written under the urgent conviction that if Christianity was to take an intelligent hold upon the next generation it would to a great extent depend on a reformation of the teaching given in the Sunday School. The test of a successful education is that we should be able to show some adequate result for it, and the tragedy of so much of the work done in the Sunday School lay in the fact that its results were so negligible. It was like teaching a lad French for several years only to discover that when he was plunged into conversation with a fluent Frenchman he was utterly helpless. Peake believed that when a boy left Sunday School he ought to have a definite apprehension of what Christianity meant, a reason for the faith that was in him, a conviction that Christianity had become his own living possession, and a knowledge of the Bible which should include an elementary acquaintance with the development of its literature, chronology, and religious history. Above all, the teacher should endeavour to foster an enthusiasm for the Bible.

The main part of the book is taken up with a criticism of the International Lessons and with constructive suggestions for their improvement. Peake deals with the fetish of invariably basing the lesson upon a brief passage of Scripture, the mistake of spreading the same lesson over the whole school, the transformation that ought to take place in the contents of the Teacher's

Magazine, and the serious omissions in the scheme of lessons which frequently involve the dropping of a subject when it is only half through. A passage on the last point will give some idea of one of the main difficulties that had to be overcome, and the way in which Peake tackled it :

“ Let us suppose that a boy learnt English history on the principles on which the Committee tries to teach Hebrew history. He would begin with the story of Julius Cæsar’s landing in Britain. In all probability he would not learn whether the invasion had any consequence or not, because the next lesson he would have would be on King Alfred and the cakes. From this he would pass to the story of the Norman Conquest, and the next thing he would learn would be the story of Henry I, who never smiled again. From this he would skip to the story of Richard and Blondel, and then to King John’s treatment of Arthur, though probably he would learn nothing about Magna Charta. Then perhaps he would get the story of Becket’s murder, and follow that up by the insurrection of Wat Tyler. Then several episodes from the French wars would probably be introduced, Crecy forming the subject of one lesson and Agincourt of the next. He would, I imagine, go on to learn how Clarence was drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine, and then how the Princes died in the Tower. Next, the story of Perkin Warbeck would engage his attention, and then he would come to the degradation of Wolsey, illustrated by his famous speech from *Henry VIII*. We cannot indeed be sure that he would get to

know anything about the English Reformation, but he would probably learn that Mary expected that after she was dead Calais would be found written on her heart. In all likelihood the defeat of the Armada would be set forth at full length, and then Lady Jane Grey and Mary Queen of Scots might form the subject of another lesson. And so one might go on with the rest of the history. But what kind of knowledge of English history would such a course give? The sense of it as a great connected movement, as a mighty development, would be absolutely wanting, and even the very stories the boy was supposed to learn would lose half their meaning from his ignorance of their historical setting. Moreover, to make the parallel complete we should have to assume that not merely were the stories chosen quite disconnected, but that many of them were only half-told."

To those who maintained that the teacher ought to fill in the gaps between these snippets Peake replied that the average teacher had not the ability to do it, that the time allotted for the lesson did not permit of such digressions, and that the language of the teacher was much poorer than the language of Scripture.

In the constructive part of the book Peake points out the kind of syllabus that ought to be employed in Junior and Senior departments, and makes suggestions as to the most effective way in which it can be taught.

He is very insistent upon the historical presentation of Christianity. He reminds us that it is the best method for securing a firm grip

of what Christianity is, that it rescues the teaching from the unreality of abstract dogmatics, that it furnishes the student with the most authentic conception of God, and that it provides us with the best incentive for living the Christian life. Again and again, both in this book and others, Peake protests against the exaltation of the living, at the expense of the historic, Christ. Teaching must not be given in snippets on the one hand, nor must it be cut adrift from historical reality on the other hand.

Peake advocates the setting of questions which the children can work out for themselves. They should be encouraged to find out all that they can about the apostle Peter in the Gospel of Matthew, to collect our Lord's utterances on Prayer in the Gospel of Luke, to discover from the Epistles of Paul how much information they give about the earthly life of Jesus. The teacher indeed should be continually practising ingenious devices of this kind.

Peake thought that it would be well worth while for some competent person to compile a list of really golden texts that every child ought to learn. Such texts, however, should be cut loose from the lesson for the Sunday to prevent their choice from becoming too restricted. The learning of long passages of Scripture, like the 119th Psalm, was not a virtue to be cultivated. It was, however, a good thing to drill the children in the order of the books of the Bible. Catechisms had their use since they set the subject out in its proper order and relations, and furnished the student with a set of accurate definitions.

They also provided a skeleton upon which the great Christian doctrines could be built in the future.

Peake attached the greatest importance to the singing of really good hymns. He resented the time that was wasted by School Anniversaries in practising the jingling trash that often characterizes these functions, and looked forward to the day when those in authority would make it a time for teaching the children the great classical hymns.

"It is surely undesirable to level everything down to their comprehension. The very feeling that the meaning largely eludes their grasp is of value, since it awes them with a sense of mystery. But quite apart from that, there is much in the great hymns which will have a real meaning to them. And I do feel strongly how important it is that they should learn many things when they are young, the full value of which will be discovered only in later years. Hence I should certainly see that such hymns as 'Rock of Ages,' 'Jesus, Lover of my Soul,' 'O God Our Help in Ages Past,' 'Souls of Men Why Will Ye Scatter,' 'When I Survey the Wondrous Cross,' and others of similar standing should become very familiar to the children. In learning to sing these hymns they are learning theology without knowing it, and free from the repellent qualities that an abstract science has for the young. Hymns that definitely aim at teaching theology are probably bad hymns, and should be rigorously boycotted."

Peake gave strong support to the training of teachers and theological students in Sunday School work. The former should be helped through the introduction of training classes and Sunday School libraries. With regard to the latter he wrote :

“It is important to draw closer the relations between the Theological Colleges and the Sunday Schools. When the fact has been grasped by the Church that the Sunday School demands from the minister his most assiduous attention and his most watchful care, it will be seen that training in the principles of teaching should constitute an important part of the College curriculum. A development which would promise much good for the future would be that Churches should definitely appoint ministers whose main care should be to look after the Sunday Schools.”

The book led to important results. A new series of International Lessons, graded according to the age of the scholar, and giving a truer conception of Christianity in its historical setting, was drawn up, Peake himself taking a leading part in the preparation of the new scheme. With the help of Professor Humphries he outlined a six years' course of study for the Intermediate Section of the Sunday School, and drew up a comprehensive list of stories suitable for the Junior Section. In 1910 the British Section of the International Lessons Committee issued a course of lessons for Senior Classes in book form under the title of *Studies in Christian Truth*. Peake was responsible for the lessons

dealing with the Old Testament and Dr. Garvie for those on the New.

Peake indeed took a keen interest in Sunday School work—an interest that was no doubt deepened by the necessity of giving religious instruction to his children. He served as President of the Manchester Sunday School Union, and of the Manchester District Primitive Methodist Sunday School Committee. He frequently spoke in connection with Sunday School work, his favourite topic being the presentation of the Bible to the Sunday School scholar.

In all his criticism of the Sunday School he was most anxious not to hurt the feelings of the Sunday School teacher, knowing from experience with what sacrifice and devotion some of them gave themselves to their task. A story that he noted down in his diary as worthy of repetition relates how a clergyman told a man that if he would give up his post as Sunday School superintendent he would give him £50. The man replied that he was not for sale that day.

In 1908 Peake published his *Religion of Israel*. The book is not concerned with the growth of individual doctrines, but traces the rise and development of Israel's religion as a whole from the time of Moses till the day when prophecy gradually became transformed into apocalypse of which Daniel is the chief representative in the Old Testament. Peake has no hesitation in declaring that the main events connected with the Exodus rest on good historical foundation. "The truth of the story that the Hebrews were slaves in Egypt is confirmed by

the consideration that no people would invent the fiction that it had descended from a horde of bondsmen." The birth of Israel's religion in a free covenant between Yahweh and His people, the creation of a national religious consciousness under the leadership of Moses, the growth of a kind of syncretism between the worship of Yahweh and the worship of the local Baalim due to the settlement in Canaan, and the attempts made by Elijah and Elisha to combat this syncretism and destroy it, are dealt with in a clear and straightforward manner. The contributions made by the different prophets to the religion of Israel are described in turn, and the book closes with a couple of chapters dealing respectively with the Sages and Psalmists of Israel and with the Theology of Judaism. The most valuable sections in the book are those which relate to the discussion of the meaning of the term Yahweh, the account of the local Baalim and their connexion with the Nazirites and Rechabites, the description of Hosea's doctrine of love created by the experience of his own unhappy marriage, the brilliant treatment of Jeremiah and his teaching on the New Covenant, the concise summaries of the work done by the Sages and Psalmists, and the excellent sketch of the Theology of Judaism which is a masterpiece of compression and insight.

The harassing limits within which Peake had to work compelled him to present results rather than the processes by which they had been reached. Scholars, who are familiar with

the ground that is covered, will recognise again and again that complicated problems are frequently summed up and solved in a single sentence. For them, however, the sincerity and freshness of the treatise will more than compensate for its dogmatic brevity. Want of space also made it necessary for Peake to omit any sketch of Semitic religion, and any but the slightest account of the religious institutions of Israel. Had he been spared to do it, it was his intention to have written a two volume work on the Religion of Israel in which his critical conclusions would have been fully amplified, and his compulsory omissions dealt with at length. The present work, however, was eminently suited for its purpose. The absence of technicalities made the sketch all the more vivid and realistic for the ordinary reader. He saw in outline how the God who dwelt at Sinai and in the Ark came to be regarded as the God of all the nations of the earth whose sins Israel, His favourite child, was to bear, and to whom Israel was to be sent as a missionary. While critical investigation lay at the basis of all the main conclusions advanced, the critical spirit is never permitted to obtrude itself, or in any way to complicate the narrative.

The same year Peake gave us his *Aids to the Devotional Study of Scripture*. These consisted of three short books entitled *The Christian Race*, *Election and Service*, and *Faded Myths*. Some years before their publication Robertson Nicoll had written to Peake to the effect that had he not known him apart from his articles

in *The Primitive Methodist Quarterly*, he would have considered him a man with no definite religious opinions whatever, in fact as open-minded as Robert Elsmere. Peake could never understand how he came to create such an impression. But an opinion entertained by so eminent an authority as Robertson Nicoll could not be ignored, and perhaps it was due to his statement, and to the feeling that others might be sharing it, that he decided to turn his hand for a short time to the writing of devotional literature. The result was a series of seventeen articles which he wrote for *The Primitive Methodist Leader*, and which he afterwards published under the title of *Aids to the Devotional Study of Scripture*. In his Introduction to the first volume, *The Christian Race*, he makes his position clear.

"The task of the professional student of the Bible is not exhausted when he has dealt with its criticism and interpretation or even with its theology. He is a debtor to his own age and especially to his fellow Christians, and it falls within the sphere of that duty to make the Scriptures more helpful to them as a means of grace. In doing so he will recognise the value of the results he has reached in his scientific investigations. But he will keep steadily in view that his chief purpose is to deepen and expand the religious life of his readers."

The Christian Race consists of a series of expositions based on the opening verses in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews. It reveals new facets in the diamond which common eyes would not be likely to see. It brings out the

significance that ought to be attached to the words inadequately translated "besetting," "witness," and "looking unto." It contains many important passages in which the author gives us his own personal confession of faith on such vital matters as Progress, Immortality, the Church, the Second Advent, the Historic, and the Indwelling Christ.

In *Election and Service*, Peake brushes away the cobwebs that have gathered round the doctrine of Election, shows how large a part the idea played in the national history of Israel, considers the place of the Church as an elect community in the scheme of God, and emphasises the fact that the election of the individual was present to the mind of the Creator before the foundation of the world. He discusses the question of superfluous merit, and makes a trenchant criticism of Anselm's theory of the Atonement. The book closes with a couple of chapters illustrating the factors that have led to the pursuit of the ascetic ideal and emphasising the need for a love which is not only anxious to serve, but which is also wise and understanding in its service. The book contains a certain amount of autobiographical material, though not so much as its predecessor.

In *Faded Myths*, Peake reveals his interest in ancient mythology and its bearing upon the religious problems of his day. He shows how the language of mythology in the religion of Israel is a proof of her complete emergence from barbarism. She has put away her childish religion though she still retains her childlike

love of mythic phrases. Emptied of their superstition they can render good service as religious symbols. This principle is illustrated in a treatment that is both historical and devotional of the myths associated with the Thunder Cloud, the Mutinous Sea, the Morning Star, and the Angel Marriages. The last chapter, entitled "My Spirit Shall Not Always Strive," contains an interesting discussion of the sin against the Holy Ghost.

These three books revealed Peake in a new light to many of his readers. They showed how ripe scholarship could enrich devotional literature, and how one who occupied an advanced position in critical questions could still stand well within the old paths on the essentials of the Christian faith.

The same year Peake also published his important book, *Christianity: Its Nature and Its Truth*. He had no use for the creedless nonsense about which we hear so much. He believed that young people were drifting away from the Faith because they had never been trained to understand or defend it. He was convinced that more ought to be done to expound the truths of Christianity in a popular and non-technical way, and it was with this aim in view that he wrote his articles in *The Sunday Strand*, entitled "Plain Thoughts on Great Subjects," which he afterwards published as *Christianity: Its Nature and Its Truth*.

The book is a careful presentation of the Christian religion from the Trinitarian standpoint, the attitude adopted being that of an orthodox,

but enlightened, evangelicalism. Religion is defined as neither cultus, creed, nor conduct, but fellowship with the Unseen. Sin is accounted for on the Darwinian idea of man's descent from an animal ancestry. The gospel portrait of Jesus is declared to be true because no Jew could have invented the story of a crucified Messiah. The Virgin Birth and the Physical Resurrection of Jesus are accepted not because they are essential to Christianity but because the historical evidence is so strongly in favour of their credibility. Our belief in the Divinity of Jesus is seen to have its ultimate foundation in His own consciousness. In his treatment of the Incarnation Peake allows the metaphysical problem to sink into the background in comparison with his conception of Christ revealing the love of God in a life both human and divine. The description of the work of Christ on the Cross as substitution is discarded for the Pauline doctrine of identification. As the identification of Christ with humanity makes salvation possible, so the union of the individual with Christ makes personal salvation actual. His life is so intimately blended with that of Christ that he and Christ become one.

The book has sometimes been criticised, and criticised rather severely, because it does not give a complete treatment of the problem. The earlier chapters dealing with Religion, and with the Nature and Attributes of God, are incomplete from a technical standpoint. More serious still, the book has nothing to tell us about Immortality, the Holy

Spirit, the doctrine of the Church, or the place that ought to be given to the Sacraments. The food that it offers to the reader is like a cake that has been baked on one side, and not fully baked on that side either.

Peake always resented this criticism because he felt that it did not take into account the aim with which the book had been compiled. In writing for a popular audience it was necessary to omit much that would have been included in a scientific and technical piece of work. In attempting to reach young people who belonged to different denominations, it was advisable to avoid those subjects on which the lines of denominational cleavage coincided with theological opinion. Above all, it was vital that the man in the street should not be repelled by a book that was too long. It was therefore impossible to include all the articles that had appeared in *The Sunday Strand*. It was a pity that for this reason Peake was compelled to omit his articles on Immortality and the Holy Spirit. When he was asked why he did not leave out his chapters on "Has Theology had its Day?" and "The Supernatural Birth of Jesus" to make room for them, he replied, first, that the chapters included were the chapters that gave the best sense of unity to the book, and, second, that the subjects dealt with were at the time the subjects that were most under discussion, and therefore most in need of treatment.

The book was also criticised because it was

felt to be too conservative in many of its arguments. People were astounded that one who was so radical a critic should be so conservative a theologian. Peake used to say that he thought that it was this trait in his character that made him the biggest enigma to many of his friends. They felt that he was like a modern soldier moving about in mediæval armour. Some bits of the panoply he had thrown on one side, and they lay very significantly in the dust. But others he still retained, and the onlooker felt that he could not bear him company till these had been discarded along with the rest.

But Peake's conservatism was not due either to lack of knowledge or to a failure to sympathise with modern thought. It was due to a temperament that was naturally conservative, to a conviction that the conclusions of criticism had in no way destroyed the old essentials of his faith, and to the warning that he had received from the example of over-radical critics, who in throwing away so much, found at last that they had thrown away everything that mattered.

Many were surprised that a book so doctrinal in its character, so conservative in its theology, and making no appeal to the controversial spirit, should be met with such a magnificent reception, for by the end of the sixth month it had passed into its sixth edition. The secret of its success undoubtedly lay in the fact that it proclaimed Eternal Truth in the simple, yet choice, language of the twentieth

century. As men read its pages they felt that the tangled problems of life were being unravelled, and that they themselves were being given a firmer and a truer grip of the Unseen. A country farmer, who would make no claim to be called either a reader or a scholar, once told the author how he had read the book utterly oblivious of everything that was happening around him. He was so absorbed in the contents that he did not notice that the lamp had risen too high, and that the room was rapidly filling with smoke. When his wife opened the door she could scarcely see him as he sat there wrapped in thick clouds and covered with black smuts from head to foot. He had been so thrilled by the presentation of the subject that not even the soot falling upon the pages of his book had been able to rouse him to what had taken place.

In 1910 a special edition of the book was published in New York for the use of American readers. In 1911 another special edition was issued for the use of the Brotherhood Movement in England. The latter contained a portrait of the author, and a preface written by him for those for whom the book was intended. Peake had great faith in the Brotherhood Movement, and predicted an important future for it. He felt, however, that it lacked systematic teaching in the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, and it was a great joy to him that his book should be selected to supply this need. He was most

anxious to save the Movement from the spirit of theological intolerance which at the time seemed to threaten it. The event, however, which brought him the greatest joy was the translation of the book into Chinese. Dr. Hopkyn Rees of Shanghai, who was a member of the editorial staff of the Christian Literature Society for China, said in a letter to Peake concerning this work :

"I have not read anything so admirably suited for the colleges in China as your book. The translation is in the Wen Li, or classical, style, and has given myself and pundit great joy and enlightenment, which will be shared by all those who may read it."

The book, which is both an apology and an exposition, constitutes to a great extent its author's confession of faith.

In 1909 Peake published his *Critical Introduction to the New Testament*. It opens with a brief discussion of the work done by Baur and the Tübingen School, passes to a consideration of the Pauline and non-Pauline Epistles, and then deals in turn with the Synoptic Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Johannine Writings. It provides us with an accurate and fair-minded summary of the critical position assigned to the separate books of the New Testament at the time of its appearance. The attitude adopted is that of free scholarship, and the criticisms, arguments, and conclusions of the most important Biblical scholars are passed under careful review, indicating the long and arduous study

by which Peake had arrived at his own conclusions. While the average student may be appalled by the frequent references to the names of foreign scholars, it must be remembered that for Peake each name stood for a living personality, and for a very definite contribution to the realm of Biblical scholarship. Like his *Religion of Israel*, the book provides us with a truly marvellous summary of the main results reached by modern critical study, though in this case, the sphere is Introduction and not Exegesis. The following year it was published in America.

In 1910, Peake brought out his *Heroes and Martyrs of Faith*. It consists of a series of studies illustrating how the principle of Faith is revealed in the bed-roll of illustrious characters mentioned in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. Peake severely sets on one side any treatment of critical or historical problems, and confines himself to the delightful task of devotional exegesis with the practical lessons drawn out. The critical conclusions assumed in the volume are those contained in the author's Commentary on the Epistle.

Faith is defined as spiritual insight. It is the faculty which enables us to realise that the invisible is visible, and that the future is present. It lifts us into fellowship with the Unseen, and makes us the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem, even while we are strangers and pilgrims here upon earth.

The heroes and martyrs of old were pre-eminently men and women who possessed

this remarkable power of spiritual perception. The faith of Abel was revealed in his ability to discriminate between the more valuable of the two sacrifices offered by his brother and himself. The faith of Noah was displayed in his persistence in providing against a forthcoming disaster while his neighbours mocked at him for his precautions. The faith of Abraham consisted not so much in looking forward to the Promised Land of Canaan, as in taking Canaan itself for a transitory stage on the way to something better. The faith of Moses was made manifest in his power to behold in a horde of slaves the people whom God had chosen, and it was confirmed by his recognition that a period of quiet discipline in the wilderness was necessary for him before he could begin his life-work. The quotation from *The Pilgrim's Progress*, illustrating the faith of Enoch, is hauntingly apt. When Christian comes to the River of Death he is stunned at the prospect of crossing it because its waters are so deep. He is informed, however, that they will become deeper or shallower as he believes in the King of the place.

And so Peake continues the narrative, bringing forth out of its treasures things new and old. At every point we see how Faith, which in this Epistle is always to be understood as spiritual intuition, is the determinative factor in the life of the hero or martyr described. When the narrative fails to elucidate fully the part played by its hero

Peake has recourse to psychological analysis and reasoned conjecture. This is particularly the case in his treatment of the Old Testament prophets, none of whom are mentioned by name in the text. The book closes with some valuable thoughts on the idea of Immortality both as it affected these ancient heroes and as it ought to affect us to-day.

In 1910 and 1912 Peake gave us respectively the first and second volumes of his Commentary on Jeremiah. The books supplied a real want, because nothing of importance had appeared in English on this prophet since the publication of Cheyne's Commentary more than a quarter of a century before. Much, however, had been done in Germany; and in the preparation of these volumes Peake received considerable help from the labours of Graf, Giesebrecht, Duhm, Cornill, and Wellhausen. It was Wellhausen's article on "Israel" in the ninth edition of *The Encyclopædia Britannica* that first opened his eyes during his undergraduate days to the significance of Jeremiah. Later, the impression was deepened and confirmed by what Wellhausen said on Jeremiah in his *Israelitische und Jüdische Geschichte*. With regard to the detailed exposition of the book, he derived most help from Cornill, with whose standpoint he was largely in sympathy.

On the question of authorship he favours the conservative attitude. He retains for Jeremiah not only the great passage on the New Covenant, but also a large proportion

of the Oracles on the Nations, in which he recognises a substantial Jeremianic nucleus that has undergone expansion at the hands of later writers. Dr. Wardle, writing in *The Primitive Methodist Leader*, says :

"The author gives the impression that he is determined to allow nothing to be taken from Jeremiah to which the prophet has any reasonable claim. From the critical lion he rescues in some passages two legs or a piece of an ear. But at the same time he never flinches, when the reasons for rejecting the Jeremianic authorship are cogent, from recognising the facts and admitting the conclusions they compel, though in matters of authenticity he clings ever to the sunnier side of doubt."

On the controversy arising out of the remarkable differences between the Hebrew text and the Greek translation of the Septuagint, Peake occupies a middle position. He does not agree with Workman that the Greek translators were in possession of another Hebrew text purer than the present one. On the other hand he believes that Graf's criticism is much too severe.

Peake does full justice to the poetic side of Jeremiah's nature. He confesses that a first impression of the book may not strike the reader very favourably in this connexion. This is due partly to the fact that large portions of the book have not come from the hand of Jeremiah, and partly to the truth that Jeremiah was a prophet before he was a poet. When

the word burned within his heart he was compelled to utter it without waiting for his lips to be touched by the Muse. In his own way, however, and along lines that were most congenial to him, Jeremiah reached a very high level indeed. There are passages, which once read, can never be forgotten.

"For two evils have my people committed: Me have they forsaken, the fountain of living waters, to hew out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, which hold no water."

"If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how wilt thou strive with horses? And if in a land of peace thou fleest, then how wilt thou do in the jungle of Jordan?"

"Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil."

"Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!"

Peake also does full justice to the human side of Jeremiah's character. He shows us how wide were the interests of the prophet through a lengthy examination of the metaphors and similes used by him. He has noticed the almond tree bursting into new life after its winter sleep. He has marked how a bird of prey turns upon a bird of plumage unlike its own. He has watched the hunter pursuing his victims one by one among the crannies

of the hills. He has observed that no bride, however forgetful she might be, ever forgot her sash. The potter remaking his marred vessel, the farmer breaking up his fallow ground, the refiner purifying the precious metal from its dross, the fisherman taking great masses of fish in his net, the children gathering the firewood for their fathers to kindle, the women kneading their dough to make cakes for their divinity, all these similes, and a host of others, are eagerly pressed by the prophet into the service of his mission. He knows the common expressions for grief and joy though mourning and merriment are alike forbidden to him. The instinct of the birds for migration enforces the conviction that man has a similar instinct for God. The close union between Israel and Yahweh is likened to the loin-cloth which since it has become spoiled must be cast aside. The book indeed is rich in metaphors drawn from the common life of men and women, of bird and beast. Peake devotes some of the best pages in his Introduction to a careful description of these figures of speech, marshalled so skilfully that they form, not a catalogue, but a picture, that has been likened by one reviewer to a brilliant piece of tapestry in which the rare bright threads stand out upon a rather sombre texture.

Above all, Peake does ample justice to the spiritual side of Jeremiah's personality. Here he discovers a close kinship between Jeremiah and Paul. Indeed it would not be

too much to say that what Paul was to Peake in the New Testament Jeremiah was to him in the Old Testament. The quotation from Myers' *St. Paul* which he prefixes to the Introduction, expresses more than appears on the surface. Peake also felt that Jeremiah approached more nearly to Jesus Christ than any other Old Testament prophet; first, in his complete abandonment of himself to his mission, and second, in his conception of religion as a personal relation between himself and his God.

"There is no one in the Old Testament who speaks to our imagination and our sympathy as this lonely and tragic figure. He was not without great merit as a poet; he portrays Nature and human emotions with the hand of a master and strikes the deep chords within us as but few have done. But it is the man himself who most appeals to us. We hear him crying to God to let the cup pass from him, and yet we see him forced to drain it to the dregs. We can tell one by one the bitter ingredients mingled in his draught; the dark sin of his people that had grown inveterate, the lighthearted folly with which it went dancing on the road to its inevitable destruction, the scorn and hatred heaped on him for treason to the country he loved beyond his life, the irritation at his rebukes, the incredulity of his warnings. We watch him as he staggers and totters under the weight of the cross to which God had doomed him, a lifelong agony for the sin and sorrow of his people, for God's pain

and his own. It is God alone who can relieve him. But it was God who appointed his task and would not relent. And thus we find in his book a new thing. Unlike other prophets, he has written down for us his emotions, his heartbroken appeals to God. Thus he became the prophet of personal religion because he had learnt the deepest meaning of religion in his own personal fellowship with God. So he rose to his conception of the New Covenant, and anticipated in that great prophecy the central truth of Christianity."

Jeremiah always stood in the front rank of Peake's heroes. When he was touring in Palestine and Egypt in the Spring of 1929 he made, at great inconvenience to himself, a special pilgrimage to Anathoth, Jeremiah's birth-place. He rode on donkeys (the only way) but found only one to share his desperate enterprise.

In his treatment of Lamentations he abandons the traditional view and ascribes it to four different authors. Chapters 2 and 4 were written by one who had witnessed the horrors of Judah's last agony and are by the same hand. Chapters 1 and 5 were written by two different authors probably toward the close of the Exile. Chapter 3 is much later. At the same time he admits the force of J. A. Selbie's argument in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* that the whole book is later than the Exile, an argument that had just received further support from C. J. Ball in the eleventh edition of *The Encyclopædia Britannica*.

In 1913 Peake published his important book *The Bible : Its Origin, Its Significance, and Its Abiding Worth*. It was heralded as the greatest volume that had come from his prolific pen, and as one of the most important contributions made to the study of Biblical literature. It gives an account of the place which the Bible must hold in view of the results of modern scholarship, and expresses the hope that it may prove helpful to some in the present perplexity. Its central point is summed up in the words :

“Revelation is a process in history and experience, and the Bible is a record of that revelation. No criticism can destroy its value ; in fact, when much of its modern criticism is accepted the Bible means to us not less, but far more.”

The book opens with an account of the present position of the Bible, considers the method and temper of the modern apologist, outlines the fresh light that has poured in from the work of the archæologist, examines the Bible in its successive linguistic dresses, deals with the problems created by the Canon and by Criticism, discusses the subjective and objective elements in the evolution of Scripture, treats of such questions as relate to the theology, authority, inspiration, revelation, and misuse of the Bible, and closes with an interesting chapter on the permanent value of Scripture. The book contains a full analysis covering twenty-four pages, and an excellent index which runs to thirteen pages of double columns.

It is dedicated by the author to his wife in commemoration of twenty-one years of married life.

It is impossible in the space at our disposal to give any adequate idea of the contents of this book, but two or three salient features must at least receive a passing mention.

Throughout the volume Peake adopts the attitude of the trained observer looking for definite facts before he begins to elaborate his theories. He reminds one of a judge summing up the evidence of all the witnesses for the benefit of the jury, but leaving it entirely to the jury to decide as to the preponderance of the evidence. Only when the case has been impartially stated for both sides, and the members of the jury have been given an opportunity for registering their decision, does he disclose his conviction in the matter. He is most anxious to see the worst side of the case, and never raises a pæan of triumph over any new conclusion unless there is cogent evidence for it. There are times, as in his treatment of Grant Allen's *The Evolution of the Idea of God*, when he states the negative position so strongly that the reader feels that no other view is going to be possible. This gives tremendous force to his final conclusions when he slowly turns the tables and relentlessly begins the task of building up his arguments on the other side.

In his treatment of the New Testament Peake is much more conservative than in his treatment of the Old. He accepts the two document

hypothesis in his analysis of the Synoptic Gospels. He preserves the Pauline authorship of all the Pauline Epistles with the possible exception of Ephesians. He recognises a genuine Pauline element in the Pastoral Epistles, though he admits that they cannot have come from Paul in their present form. He believes that John of Ephesus was the son of Zebedee, that he was the source, directly or indirectly, of the tradition incorporated in the Fourth Gospel, and that he was the Beloved Disciple.

Peake was convinced that more attention ought to be given by religious leaders to the refutation of such crazy cults as Second Adventism and Anglo-Israelism which often take the public in with their plausible theories. He felt that there was a real danger that the children of light might become so high-browed that they would dismiss such religiosity as beneath their notice. He believed, too, that we were in for a further recrudescence of such teaching and in keeping with his conviction included a chapter on the Misuse of the Bible.

But the most important section in the book is that which deals with the argument from experience in which he shows how reckless it is to state the Christian case on experience alone. Our individual experience is the product of many factors and needs to be checked and enlarged by the collective experience. It is fatal to Christianity to base it entirely either on history or on experience considered exclusively:

"Experience alone and history alone can neither of them bear the weight of the Christian case. Locked into an arch they can."

It is interesting in this connexion to quote from a letter that Peake wrote to his father as far back as December 9th, 1892 :

"People say they are so sure of the truth of Christianity from their own consciousness that if the whole of the New Testament were lost their faith would still remain unaffected. I very strongly believe this to be not simply a mistake but a very dangerous form of teaching. Dr. Dale and Hugh Price Hughes are the leading representatives of this false theory. On the contrary I say that Christianity is a *historical* religion, resting upon certain historical facts, and unless these facts are true the experience of which they speak is a delusion."

During the War, Peake was seriously concerned about the treatment of the conscientious objector. In addition to signing various protests and appeals he wrote a series of articles for *The Primitive Methodist Leader* in the autumn of 1917 under the title of "Who Is Offended And I Burn Not?" The following spring the articles were published in the form of a book to which Peake gave the title *Prisoners of Hope*, a phrase taken from Zechariah. Two motives, he tells us, prompted him in his task: first, a keen sympathy with the victims, though he did not share their views; and second, a desire that his own Church should be loyal to its ancient convictions

in spite of all temptations to surrender them for the duration of the War.

The first part of the book deals with the various counts that have been brought against the conscientious objector. To the argument that the conscientious objector is declining one of the fundamental duties of a citizen, the defence of his country, Peake replies that if a man is convinced that his country is guilty of a crime against God and humanity, it is his plain duty as a Christian to throw down his arms in obedience to his conscience rather than co-operate in the crime which his conscience condemns. For the Christian the vital question is not the safety of the State, but the accomplishment of the will of God. To the plea that even if the conscience of the pacifist prevents him from taking part in War he ought nevertheless to do something to help his country, Peake points out that it is by no means easy to distinguish between "helping one's country" and "helping one's country in its struggle against Germany." A civilian who releases a grocer that he may go out and kill must bear some responsibility for the killing. To the proposition that it is base to accept all the privileges of citizenship and refuse its primary obligations, Peake brings forward the examples of Jeremiah and the early Christians. These heroes and martyrs felt that the best way in which they could serve their country was in protesting against its policy. To the view that it is unfair for the pacifist to remain in safety at home while others are

enduring the risk and horror of war, Peake answers that the pacifist is not the only person who is shielded in this way. There are many men of military age, earning large salaries, in occupations that have been exempted. To those who deny the claims of the individual conscience, and who are of the opinion that individualism has become a fetish, Peake retorts (1) that there is no such thing as a collective judgment on this matter; (2) that majorities are no more infallible than minorities; and (3) that it is a very dangerous policy to cheapen conscience. "The man who utters a sneer at conscience is fooling with moral explosives."

In the latter part of the book Peake deals with the legal position as it affects the conscientious objector, and with the treatment that has been meted out to him. He condemns the Tribunals not only for their utter incompetence, but also for their Prussian spirit. He quotes cases of bullying in the barracks that had resulted in death for the unhappy victim. He hits out against the injustice of punishing a man more than once for the same crime. He discloses some of the horrible practices that marked our penal system at this time, many of which have fortunately been remedied since. He advocates the setting up of a Commission to review the sentences of those conscientious objectors who are still in prison. In the appendix he gives an account of concessions recently made to all prisoners and to conscientious objectors in particular. He also quotes a number of typical cases dealt

with by the Tribunals, and gives a brief record of cases where young men had died under prison treatment.

The book does not always provide us with pleasant reading, but along with other books of a kindred nature, it played an important part in its endeavour to remedy a very disagreeable situation.

In 1916 Peake published his second Hartley Lecture, *The Revelation of John*. The book falls into two parts. The first part deals with general questions of criticism, history, theology, and interpretation. The second part is concerned with the exposition of the Apocalypse section by section. Peake holds that the book was not written by the Apostle John, that it belongs to the latter part of the reign of Domitian, and that the author, whoever he was, has incorporated earlier documents and drawn largely upon apocalyptic tradition. He takes the Beast to be the Roman Empire incarnate in the figure of the returning Nero, and believes that the book was called forth by the terrible persecution which the author thought would come from the demand that Christians should offer worship to the Emperor.

Probably the most valuable part of the book is that which discusses the four main types of interpretation. Peake rejects the Continuous-Historical theory according to which the author presents us with the course of events from his own time to the end. He dismisses the Futurist theory which maintains that the events described in the book are concerned with the

end of time. He handles with respect, but dissociates himself from, the Spiritually Didactic mode of interpretation, advocated by Milligan, who regards the book as dealing not with historical events but with the principles which control the development of history. He finds his solution in the Præterist view, in its usual form, according to which the Apocalypse deals with the contemporary situation and its immediate future.

The book closes with a chapter on the permanent value of the Apocalypse in which Peake maintains that it does not provide us with any clue by which the secret of the future can be unravelled, but that it is precious for the lofty courage of the author, for his unshaken faith in the triumph of Christ over Antichrist, and for his conviction that, after suffering has passed away, the Kingdom of God will be established here upon earth. The book is essentially a tract for bad times, reminding us that though the forces of evil may be very powerful the ultimate victory is in the hands of the Lamb who was slain at Calvary.

The publication of the book was particularly welcome because during the latter part of the War the Apocalypse had become the most-discussed book in the New Testament, and the discussion had often revealed an appalling amount of ignorance on the part of those both inside as well as outside the Church. Many were of the opinion that the Book of Revelation was an authoritative document, written in some obscure language, but giving full

information with regard to the future history of the world once its symbolism had been rightly interpreted. Against all this nonsense Peake boldly proclaimed the view that the book was written to meet the needs of the first century, and that the outlook of the writer never ventured further than the horizon of his own day. The book was not to be read as though it were some mystic, recondite, and occult Scripture steeped in the hidden counsels of God.

In 1922 Peake published *The Nature of Scripture*. This consists of a collection of papers and lectures dealing with the nature and value of the Bible from the standpoint of the student who combines an acceptance of the critical method with a loyal adhesion to the evangelical faith. Special emphasis is laid upon the value of the Old Testament. There is, however, no necessity to go into details, as the most important positions put forward in the book have already been mentioned.

In 1923 Peake published his *Brotherhood in the Old Testament*. The book was the John Clifford Lecture for that year, and expressed his sympathy with the Brotherhood Movement and with the work of its secretary, the Rev. Tom Sykes. Its aim is to collect and classify the rich material associated with such subjects as the family, the nation, and mankind at large. It serves the double purpose of showing the true way in which the Old Testament should be read, and of manifesting with attractive freshness its moral and religious teaching.

At first sight one may feel that to look for Brotherhood in the Old Testament is like looking for snakes in Iceland. To our way of thinking many of the practices carried out by the ancient Israelites were utterly ruthless, their treatment of their enemies lacking for nothing in cruelty. We have to remember, however, the universal custom of the times, and the strong emphasis placed upon corporate responsibility. We have to remember, too, that nowhere else in early literature do we find more passionate pleas for the poor, the unfortunate, and the oppressed. Nor must we forget that even slavery in ancient Israel was a far kindlier thing than it was in the Southern States of America less than a century ago. Side by side with all that is cruel and barbaric in Old Testament times we can trace the growth of a more humane spirit. While Peake does not refrain from putting in the shadows he is careful to draw attention to the sunshine.

He reminds us that since Revelation is a process in history, there is no need for the student to be distressed because of the moral differences between the Old and the New Testaments. He reminds us, too, that we have to do with underlying principles rather than with concrete cases since there is an immeasurable distance between the simple society that existed in ancient Israel and the highly complex forms of civilisation as we know them to-day. Much, however, can be learned from such a study, since the natural

principles of righteousness remain true for each generation. It is fatal to deprecate the significance of Israel's contribution because the historical circumstances happen to be more primitive. After passing in review the political and social development of Israel, he discusses her attitude to the family, slavery, friendship, poverty, humanitarianism, justice, crime, war, and peace. A valuable chapter deals with the relations of Israel to other countries, special emphasis being laid upon the book of Jonah. The volume closes with a chapter on the contribution of the New Testament to the idea of Brotherhood, Christianity being regarded as a great tide of redemptive energy, which renews our exhausted vigour, a fountain of living water, cleansing even our most secret thoughts. Three things are declared to be necessary for us if Christianity is to be fairly tried, and they are all very difficult. The first is rightly to understand the religious and the ethical principles of Jesus; the second is to understand our own conditions and the problems they present; the third is to make an unflinching application of the principles of Jesus to the conditions in which we live.

The book discusses in a concise manner many questions that whet the appetite of the reader the moment that they are stated. Why did the Children of Israel condemn the payment of interest on loans? Was Renan right when he asserted that the Prophets were socialists? Would Christianity have been the gainer had Paul worked for the emancipation

of the slave? What is the true relation between Christianity and the State? These questions, and many more, break rich soil for the average reader.

In 1926 Peake published his last book, *The Life of Sir William Hartley*, in which he pays a noble tribute to the work and character of his friend. The material is grouped according to subject rather than according to chronology, and throughout the book the human interest is kept well to the front. Many sidelights are thrown on the career of Sir William. We are told, for instance, how when he was quite young, a Roman Catholic priest at Colne tried to have him educated for the priesthood, how his mother objected to his being trained for the Bar because the untruthfulness with which lawyers are generally credited would be damaging to his spiritual interests, and how when he started out in life he would walk for twenty miles and not take twelve pence. The public life of Sir William is also given full place, and there are valuable chapters in connection with his work for his business, his church, and his hospitals.

But the main interest of the book lies in the careful delineation of Sir William's personal qualities.

Peake emphasises the integrity of Sir William's character as it is revealed in the purity of his jam. On the day after the fruit had been boiled he would be at the factory at six o'clock in the morning and would test samples from every boiling of jam, often

examining as many as a thousand jars at a time. Somebody once asked a grocer rather scornfully what the Nonconformist conscience was. The grocer promptly reached down a pot of Hartley's jam, and planking it down on the counter said with some emphasis, "That's the Nonconformist conscience."

When we hear of wealthy people being generous we are sometimes inclined to be cynical. Peake tells us that Sir William began to practise his generosity when he was in straitened circumstances. The greatest event in his life, according to Sir William's own confession, occurred on New Year's day, 1877, when he and his wife made a written vow that every year they would devote a tenth of their income to religious and philanthropic objects. At the time when the vow was registered Sir William was greatly in need of more capital for his business, and was keeping a wife and six children on £5 a week. As his wealth increased so did the ratio of his generosity till at last one-third of his gross income was set aside as "The Lord's Money." The same generosity was also meted out to his employees, to whom he was accustomed to pay from 20 to 40 per cent. above the average wage.

Sir William had a sunny disposition and could always appreciate a good story. It was inevitable that Peake should include a few of these in the biography, and one that tickled the two friends in particular must be quoted. It is from a letter that Sir William received from a Welsh customer.

"DEAR SIR,

Why in the name of goodness gracious don't you send the jam I ordered last week? I have already lost Mr. Jones' custom through you. Why don't you send the jam, man? Bother you, you are a nuisance whatever! Send the jam at once, quick.

Yours truly,

JOHN DAVIES.

P.S.—DEAR SIR,

Since writing the above letter I have found the jam under the counter."

The book closes with a fine tribute to Sir William's loyalty, revealed not only in his home and business, but also in his church and in his religious life.

Peake's premature death has deprived us of four volumes that he had hoped to complete some day: his treatise on *Man and Sin*, his commentary on Isaiah, his two-volume work on *The Religion of Israel*, and his *magnum opus* on the apostle Paul. All that he has left behind are his lectures on the "Servant of Yahweh," given at King's College, London, in the spring of 1926, and his lectures dealing with Paul and with two or three Old Testament subjects delivered in connection with the John Rylands Library. Nothing has been said about them in this chapter as it is hoped to publish them shortly in book form, and any discussion here would be premature.

Peake's main contribution as an author, not only to Primitive Methodism but to the religious life of the country is to be found in the fact that he saved it from a Fundamentalist controversy similar to the one that has taken place in America. Primitive Methodism was not more friendly to critical views than other denominations, but the remarkable combination of higher critic and sincere evangelist in the character of Peake enabled him to lead his Church, and through her other Churches, to a faith which though modern in its outlook was nevertheless strictly evangelical in its essence. Several scholars in their tributes have laid emphasis upon this fact, and I cannot do better than close this chapter with the words of Dr. George Jackson in *The Manchester Guardian* for August 19th, 1929.

"Perhaps it was Dr. Peake's greatest service not merely to his own communion but to the whole religious life of England, that he helped to save us from a 'Fundamentalist' controversy such as that which has devastated large sections of the Church in America. He knew the facts which the modern study of the Bible has brought to light. He knew them, and he was frank and fearless in telling them; but he was also a simple and consistent believer in Jesus, and he let that be seen too; and therefore men who could not always follow him were ready to trust him and let him go his own way. If the Free Churches of England have been able without disaster to navigate the broken water of the last thirty years, it is largely to

the wisdom and patience of trusty and trusted pilots like Arthur Samuel Peake that they owe it."

CHAPTER VIII
DR. PEAKE AS EDITOR

In June 1919, on the unanimous invitation of 'The Primitive Methodist Preachers' Friendly Society, Peake was appointed editor of *The Holborn Review*, to which he had been a regular contributor since writing his first article for it on the Synoptic Problem in 1891. In undertaking the editorship he introduced several new features that greatly enhanced its value and that did much to increase its circulation. To secure the services of well-known writers, whose contributions would lend distinction to the *Review*, he created a secret service fund to which leading laymen contributed, and out of which he was able to offer reasonable remuneration. The average Primitive Methodist was willing to write at the ridiculously low charge of two shillings a page, but it was impossible to ask an outsider to contribute for such a pittance. To create further interest he began the policy of celebrating the centenaries of famous people. On the ter-centenary of George Fox, for example, he devoted no less than seven articles to the memory of the illustrious Quaker. At the suggestion of the ministers he introduced a Study Circle from January, 1923. Here some of the subjects discussed under the form of a questionnaire with suggestions for further reading were: "Spiritual Healing," "Juvenile Crime," "The Sermon on

the Mount," the "Doctrine of the Atonement," "Modernism and the Person of Christ."

But the two features that did most to secure distinction for the *Review* were the Section on Current Literature and the Editorial Notes.

Many people purchased the magazine simply for the opportunity of reading the long and numerous reviews that it gave to current literature. Frequently more than half the reviews would be written by Peake, and they always revealed a wide range of reading on his part. While he made a practice of looking for the good points in the book he was reviewing he could when necessary be severe, and few things exasperated him more than when an author who was an expert in his own special department ventured to intrude his own pet theories on matters in no way connected with his subject. He could accept with silent gratitude all the critical views expressed by Saintsbury in the realm in which he was a recognised master, but the moment that Saintsbury begins to talk about politics, economics, religion, teetotalism, or conscientious objectors, he condemns him without mercy. He despised the man who used the authority that he possessed in one sphere to advance his interests in another sphere where he was in no way competent to speak. He also possessed a keen eye for detail, and not infrequently an author would discover that while the subject matter of his book was highly praised the details in it would be severely censured. For the main contents of Saintsbury's standard work on *The History of the French Novel* he

can hardly discover words that are warm enough to express his gratitude and admiration. When, however, he comes to details he is amazed that one whose main occupation was the study of literature should never have mastered the elements of style. He deplores his profusion of parentheses, his use of inverted commas, his numerous tags from French, Latin, and Greek, his introduction of newly-coined and often hideous words, the slangy nature and the sprawling length of some of his sentences.

The "Editorial Notes" frequently dealt with well-known preachers and scholars whom Peake knew, and were often of a more personal nature than would at one time have been considered appropriate in such a magazine. These delightful sketches, however, were often the first thing that the reader turned to, and the suggestion was made more than once that it would be a happy event if Peake would gather together his impressions of famous people and and set them out in book form. A few extracts here will perhaps be of interest:

"I chanced to be in Oxford once when Jowett was preaching at Mansfield on the Sunday. His sermon was the famous sermon on 'Christ died,' which produced such an effect when it was preached at Carr's Lane. I do not think the impression that Sunday morning was at all comparable with the impression produced in his own pulpit; and, if I must be quite frank, on none of the occasions when I heard him did he move me at all powerfully. My feeling about Jowett was never unfavourable; his sermons

always seemed to my untutored instinct good, but I was not so susceptible to his influence either as the crowds on the one side or many of the expert preachers on the other. But a friend of mine told me how one of our really great preachers who had listened to Jowett, no doubt with an expert appreciation of the art in the sermon, contrasted 'these dainty cutlets' with the great joints from which Dale used to carve. The contrast was, I think, just; but Mr. Porritt is probably correct in what he says on Jowett as Dale's successor. 'Dr. Dale's pre-eminence blinded men's eyes to the truth that each generation produces the man needed for the continuance of the work. Jowett was not another Dale, and it may even be doubted whether another Dale would have met the new needs of the swiftly changing times.' Jowett did meet them and met them magnificently."

—April, 1925.

"Dr. Forsyth's conversation was often delightfully witty. I remember once when a theological conference was being held at Lancashire College quite a number of us sat after supper in the common room. Many stories were told and when I met Dr. Forsyth next morning he told me that one of mine was the only one he remembered. It is a story which is better heard than read but I narrate it for the benefit of those who may not know it. A stranger met a little boy crying as if his heart was broken. He asked him what was the matter. Shaken with sobs the boy said, 'Father was knocking a nail in the floor and he hit his

thumb.' 'Oh!' said the stranger, as he felt for a penny, 'what a good sympathetic little boy you are to cry because your father hit his thumb.' Struggling with a fresh paroxysm of tears the boy managed to reply, 'I didn't cry; I laughed.'"—January, 1922.

"What I find most striking about Dr. Montefiore is his attitude to Christianity. On the feeling towards our religion which has been current in Judaism I need not linger, save to admit with sadness how great has been the occasion for it given by the Christian Church. But where the old bitterness, scorn, and misrepresentation have been largely surrendered, one is still conscious of a studied coolness, a careful avoidance of enthusiasm, and in particular an unwillingness to recognise the originality of Jesus; at least to admit that anything original he said might also be true. To such sectarian and unscientific prejudice Dr. Montefiore has risen superior; and although his attitude to Jesus is not our own, he has written of him with much insight, sympathy, and beauty of expression and has sought to interpret him to his co-religionists. It was with unusual pleasure that I recently presented him at the University of Manchester for the degree of Doctor of Divinity, an honour conferred on him with great cordiality."—January, 1921.

Peake was eager to promote a better understanding between Judaism and Christianity. He was a Vice-President of the Society for Hebraic Studies, and took the chair for the Chief Rabbi, who is head of all the Jews in the British

Empire, when the latter visited Manchester in April 1923 and addressed a large assembly in the Houldsworth Hall on "The Bible as a Book."

But in his work as editor Peake did not confine his activities to *The Holborn Review*.

In 1905 he edited a volume of Inaugural Lectures delivered by the members of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Manchester. They constituted the first fruits in the labours of the new Faculty, and bore witness to the unsectarian spirit in which it had been founded. Peake wrote the introduction and contributed an article entitled "The Present Movement of Biblical Science."

In 1919 Peake finished his *magnum opus* as editor—*Peake's Commentary on the Bible*. Its aim was to make the generally accepted results of Biblical scholarship plain to the ordinary reader. Several features distinguished the work. It was printed without the text in order to save space. It made the paragraph, and not the verse, the unit of exposition. It contained numerous articles dealing with different Biblical subjects. It included an index running to nearly sixty-eight pages of small type each page being divided into three columns. There are no less than fifty-five references to the word "vision," while the references to "Isaiah" introduce the student to a veritable mine of knowledge concerning the book of Isaiah and its writers. The Commentary represented the view of the average scholar rather than that of the extremist, and was free from all ecclesiastical bias. A team

of sixty-one contributors assisted in the building up of the book of which Peake himself wrote about one-eighth. For the New Testament he had the assistance of Dr. Grieve, who worked through the contributions in manuscript and in proof, did much of the cross-referencing, and made many valuable suggestions. Peake himself went through the Commentary eight times, and his editorial hand is apparent everywhere in the volume. Originally it was intended to issue the book at the ridiculously small price of 3s. 6d. The outbreak of the War, and the consequent rise in the cost of material, made this impossible. It was, however, remarkably cheap at its issued price of 10s. 6d. Peake received the sum of £100 for his work as editor, to which on his request for further payment the publishers added another £100 in view of the Commentary's enormous success.

In spite of its fairly moderate tone, however, the Commentary brought a hornet's nest about Peake's ears as the following quotations will show :

"Such men as Dr. Peake, Canon Barnes, and others are doing Satan's work far more effectually than the blatant infidel of our parks and commons. These men, while professing to be followers of Christ and taking the pay of the Churches, are really undermining His authority through their attacks on the Written Word, for be sure of one thing, the Written Word and the Person of Our Lord stand or fall together."—*The Life of Faith*, January 13th, 1921.

"We used to be told that Bible science and

history were faulty, but now we learn that its ethics and theology and its teaching on social and economic subjects are all quite unreliable. Then the world is much poorer than we thought. We have lost much, and what does Dr. Peake offer to supply the loss? According to him the Bible is wrong; Christ, His apostles, the prophets, and fathers of the Church are all wrong; creeds and confessions, standards and Prayer-book are all wrong; and all we have left on which to rely for spiritual and eternal truth is—Dr. Peake! What he approves is right. He is the 'Truth Controller.' We have no infallible Christ now, but we have Dr. Peake! He is the light of the world! Even his own critical compeers disagree with him widely, but still he is our new infallible Pope. We must stand in a queue at his door, and take our Peake-controlled doles of doctrine and be thankful. We wonder what the Primitives think of it all. Before the critics fouled their nest, their slogan was: 'Experience, expression, expansion.' But for many years now the tide has ebbed rather than flowed with them, and no wonder, when a man like Dr. Peake is entrusted with the responsible duty of preparing candidates for their ministry."—*The Christian Herald*, July 1st, 1920.

Peake's sense of humour saved him from taking such attacks seriously to heart. He used to say that they hurt him about as much as a pin prick would hurt a rhinoceros. Occasionally in the interests of public opinion he would lead a vigorous attack into the camp of the Fundamentalists as when an overbold preacher wrote

a letter to *The British Weekly* asserting that the Fundamentalists possessed more knowledge and learning than those who belonged to the critical school, or when Dr. Fitchett published his book, *Where the Higher Criticism Fails*, the arguments of which he utterly demolished in his Editorial Notes in *The Holborn Review*.

In 1925 Peake edited *The People and the Book*. The volume consists of fifteen essays written by fifteen Old Testament scholars drawn from the Society for Old Testament Study, and is dedicated to the memory of George Buchanan Gray. It was published, first, as a protest against the tendency to relegate the Old Testament to a position of relative insignificance, and second, to indicate the present position in Old Testament study. It contains interesting chapters on the history of Israel, its language, psychology, and religious environment, to which are added chapters on biblical criticism and on the distinctive contribution of Israel to the religious development of mankind. There is also an important chapter on the Jewish interpretation of the Old Testament by the Jewish scholar, Dr. Israel Abrahams. Peake wrote the Introduction and contributed the essay entitled "The Religion of Israel from David to the Return from Exile."

The same year Peake also edited along with Dr. R. G. Parsons the British Edition of *An Outline of Christianity*. This consisted of a five volume work, beautifully illustrated, dealing with the history of Christianity from the time of Our Lord down to the present day. The

preparation of the American Edition had been due to the suggestion of Mr. R. H. Paget, who had sought to combat the irreligion of the masses and their ignorance of Christianity by planning the history of Christianity in a comprehensive and attractive form. He was anxious that the work should also be of service to the British public. He came over to England for this purpose and wrote to Peake asking for an interview. He wanted to secure two editors, one who would represent the Church of England and one who would represent the Free Churches. Acting on the advice that he had received in America he desired that Peake should be the Free Church editor. Peake was rather reluctant to undertake any more editorial work, but Mr. Paget was under the impression that the task would prove comparatively easy, and after going through the typescript of the American Edition, as far as it was available, he consented to accept the responsibility. His colleague at Manchester, Dr. R. G. Parsons, agreed to represent the Church of England, and in the planning of the British Edition the editors not only had the co-operation of Mr. Paget and of his colleague Mr. Wheeler, but also of the British publishers who took a keen and active interest in it. While many of the American articles were retained it was found necessary to add other articles and to have subjects treated by British instead of by American writers. The preparation of the British Edition involved the editors in a heavy correspondence and in a careful study of the manuscripts. It was soon discovered that extensive rearrangement

and rewriting would be necessary in four out of the five volumes, and for nearly two years the two editors met at least weekly for a long afternoon—often from two to seven o'clock. Their work was, however, lightened by the fact that the Waverley Book Company, who undertook the publication of the volumes, relieved the editors of all proof reading and of all the details concerning its production.

Over a hundred leading authors contributed to the success of the work. No religious test was imposed, and in some cases the writers did not even belong to the Christian Church. Among the contributors we find such outstanding personalities as Lord Asquith, Ramsay Macdonald, the present Archbishop of York, Dean Inge, Canon Streeter, Dr. James Moffatt, Professor J. Arthur Thomson, G. K. Chesterton, Alfred Noyes, Claude Montefiore, Maude Royden, and a host of others whose names are household words. Peake himself contributed several articles including those on the "Criticism of the Old Testament," the "Canon of the New Testament," and the "Genius of Methodism." He regarded the work as a contribution towards Reunion.

The following letters give some insight into Peake's work as an editor:

1. To a contributor whose manuscript was very difficult to decipher:

"I suppose it must have taken me four or five times as long to go through as any ordinary paper, and as I am terribly pressed I can't afford to go through it a second time so as to get some

clear idea of the drift of certain parts of it. The sheer difficulty of holding on and making sense of it, especially in some parts, has left me no power of concentrating on the subject matter. If I could have had the relief of swearing as I read it I should have excelled myself, and I guess the compositors will let themselves go. There are two fundamental blunders about the paper. The first is that you have not spaced between the lines. In some cases the lines have actually touched and a trifle overlapped. This makes it much more difficult to read and to take in. But of course, it adds immensely to the difficulty of making corrections and additions because they cannot be interlinear. The other is that the thing has been typed on such flimsy paper that I have found it difficult to make corrections on it. And it has been necessary to make corrections because the alterations have in certain cases not been perfectly carried through, and as they stood the sense has been destroyed. And owing to the lack of proper room the corrections have in some cases been so cramped that I have had great difficulty in making them out, sometimes have even had to put a magnifying glass over them. I hope the printers will make it out and get it right, but it is imperative that you should go over the proof with minute care. Only don't hack it about, as the cost of corrections forbids this. I'm very much afraid it will, even with the omissions, be on the long side, and this will be more than usually unfortunate this time, because I have had to trespass on my small type space more than I like. How-

ever I'm sending it with a heavy heart and hoping for the best. When it comes out in straightforward print I shall be able to form some judgment of it ; as it is I'm taking it on trust. But please sign the pledge at once that if ever you have to submit anything else to a hard-driven editor you will have it typed on good paper which can be written on by people who don't use soft J pens, and that as much space be left between the lines at least as I am leaving in this letter. Of course, if you expect to cut the typescript about you ought to leave twice the space. It really isn't rudimentary virtue to make an editor's job, already difficult and thankless enough, so much more exasperating for him. Of course, I recognise that Copec must have been very exacting, but then my work is terribly exacting, too, and time is irrecoverable, when it has been wasted in doing what ought never to have been necessary. I think that you ought to have had some of the worst sheets typed out again. I have no doubt it seems quite straightforward to you because you are familiar with it. But as I have read it I have felt like a man with a train to catch who is forced to pick his way down a muddy road because he can't splash himself from head to heel, since he must turn up at his destination spick and span. For heaven's sake turn over a new leaf and let it be a substantial leaf and leave plenty of space between the lines when you come to write on it.

" You may be wondering why with this pressure on my time I write at such length. It is partly philanthropic ; I want to save other editors

and composers ; but partly if I stifle my feelings I shall create an undesirable complex which may take the form of a real and not a symbolical nightmare.

"And the irony of it is that this unspeakable paper is a plea for its rightful place to be given to the *æsthetic* element."

2. To a contributor who had been unduly severe in one of his reviews :

"I wonder whether you could find it in your heart to mitigate a little what you say about S——, I mean perhaps in expression rather than in substance. I have in fact taken out 'very muddy' and substituted 'somewhat cloudy' which expresses your meaning in a somewhat heavenlier form. And is there anything that you could say in appreciation ? The last sentence doesn't come to much, for where everything else is so bad the best is likely to be bad too. I do not know the author, but I was in correspondence with him about a collection of hymns, also reviewed in this number, in which he had rendered a good deal of assistance to the collector. I am returning it in case you feel you can handle him as if you loved him while you string him on your hook. I didn't read a line of the book myself and am not quarrelling at all with your judgment ; but I'm afraid in the list of casualties he will appear among the 'very seriously wounded.'"

3. To a contributor who was inclined to be late in sending in his manuscripts :

"Please work the reviews off as soon as convenient. I only once heard Dr. Torrey preach

and he struck me as essentially a commercial traveller for God with a first class line to offer. The best thing about his sermon was his text which showed a touch of genius in its collocation of two passages: 'The Holy Ghost saith, To-day'; 'The fool saith, To-morrow.' I pass on the text as a word in season."

CHAPTER IX

REMINISCENCES AND REFLECTIONS

My earliest memory of my father goes back to the days of his first operation when I used to go into his study where he was lying convalescent, in the house at Withington Road, Manchester, and sing to him about the beautiful bird in the gilded cage. My father always had a horror of cruelty in any of its forms, and especially the cruelty that kept birds in cages or that enjoyed hunting merely for hunting's sake. Perhaps his idea in teaching me this simple song at the beginning of life was to instil the same principle into me. If the heart can be trained in kindness in its earliest days so many other problems solve themselves of their own accord when it comes to later life. It has not been possible to trace the author of the song, but as my father was in the habit of making up short verses himself, it is not unlikely that he wrote it. The verse runs :

“ It's only a bird in a gilded cage,
A beautiful sight to see,
You'd think she was happy and free from care,
She's not, though she seems to be.”

Two points about the verse demand a passing comment because they formed part and parcel of father's philosophy of childhood. (1) Though

the child is meant to regard the subject as a painful one, every attempt is made to see that his feelings are in no way harrowed. The picture that he is to condemn is a picture which at first sight strikes him as being beautiful. (2) By not stating the definite reason why the bird was unhappy, the child is led to ask questions, and so draw the moral for himself. A lesson that is self-taught is always better than a lesson that is imposed upon us by some outside authority.

The only other memory of my very early childhood is that of my father conducting family prayers—also in the old study at Withington Road. When we were children it was his custom to take family prayers each morning after we had had breakfast. These always consisted of a short passage from Scripture (frequently a story), two prayers from the Church of England Prayer Book, the Lord's Prayer, and the Benediction. Though a great believer in extempore prayer where the pulpit was concerned, he always maintained that some of the prayers in the Anglican Prayer Book seemed to have been inspired beyond any other written prayers that he had ever come across, and on the simpler of these we as children were brought up. Later we were taught a prayer of our own which we learnt at his knee. By this time we had become accustomed to the idea of prayer, and could be led with ease from family to private devotion.

The policy adopted by my father will perhaps be criticised by some on the ground that private prayer ought to come before public prayer. It will be maintained that it is a good thing to

teach a child a simple prayer of his own at a much earlier age. Father, I think, would have replied that prayer is best learnt through the example of one's elders kneeling together in the family circle; that the idea of prayer must be taught before the actual words of prayer can be understood. He wanted us to pray with intelligence and when it came to offering a prayer of our own he was anxious that we should do it with reverence and with a mind that had been previously prepared for its task. To him it seemed most natural that father and mother should create the right atmosphere by kneeling together in family worship, and, whatever our criticisms may be, we do well to remember the words that Carlyle has put into the mouth of Teufelsdröckh when referring to the example of his foster-parents in the days of his infancy. "The highest whom I knew on earth I here saw bowed down, with awe unspeakable, before a Higher in Heaven; such things, especially in infancy, reach inwards to the very core of your being."

In the September of 1903 we removed from Withington Road to Wellington Road, where we remained till 1912. In some ways these were the most formative years in our lives. Three days in the year always stood out with special prominence: Gunpowder Day, Christmas Day, and Sunday.

On Gunpowder Day father always had a magnificent array of fireworks which he used to set off in the back garden much to our delight. He himself would enter into the fun and frolic

of the evening with all the enthusiasm of a child. Had the average man seen him lighting a rocket or jumping away from a cracker he would never have associated him with the Professor of Biblical Exegesis in the University of Manchester.

Christmas was nearly always spent at the farm of our uncle and auntie in Shropshire, and Christmas Day was the one day in the year on which father never reckoned to do any work. The whole season was always made a royal one for us boys. The old farm house, with its long passages, its panelled walls, its dimly-lit hall, its fields, ponds, and pine trees, often covered with snow and frost, was one in which all the romance of Christmas could be fully and fitly celebrated. When games were played, he always entered into them with characteristic vigour: Hunt the Thimble, Hide and Seek, and, above all, Blind Man's Buff, being his apparent favourites.

Sunday morning worship was nearly always a painful experience, and I am afraid that I have few happy memories to record here. There were no children's hymns or children's addresses in those days—except, perhaps, on very rare occasions. The hymns were generally above one's head. The long prayer was a perfect nightmare. The sermon not infrequently resembled Tennyson's Brook. If I may let out a secret, my brothers and I always looked forward to the Sundays on which a student from Hartley College was planned. We thought that not knowing so much, he would not be able to talk

for so long ! But, of course, it was not so much the fault of the preachers. Children ought never to worship with grown-ups unless a large part of the service, at any rate, has first been brought down to their level.

Father, in the main, was sympathetic, and though there were times when we were compelled to go to Church against our will, he did not press his point unduly. But what we missed on Sunday morning was always abundantly made up for on Sunday afternoon. Then he would gather us round the fireside and read to us sometimes hour after hour. *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *The Holy War*, *The Fairchild Family*, *Sandford and Merton*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, stories from the Old and New Testaments were read through in this way. Every now and then he would break off and question us on what he had read, and when he came to the moral of any story it was always his method to make us discover it for ourselves.

He was also a great believer in the value of pictures as a method of religious education. He had a number of Bibles, beautifully illustrated, which he would show us from time to time, telling the story behind each picture as he turned the pages over. The same was also true for *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and it is not too much to say, that by the age of five, I was as familiar with the characters in that book as the average man is with his multiplication tables. My first love for history was also created in this way, and supplemented still further by the living pictures to which I was taken as a boy, when the two

pageants were held at Oxford and St. Albans in 1907. It is not such a far cry as we sometimes think from the pictures that are shown to us in childhood to the degrees that we afterwards win at Oxford or Cambridge.

Another thing on which he laid great stress was the importance of music. Not being a musician himself he purchased a gramophone to give us an idea of tune, to introduce us to some of the best singers, and to instruct us in some of the hymns that he wanted us to learn. It was through the gramophone that we received our first introduction to such well-known hymns as "Onward Christian Soldiers," "Jerusalem the Golden," "Abide With Me," and "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing." The instrument gave us endless pleasure, and my mother once remarked that father had never bought anything for the house for which he had been more fully repaid. Indeed in all these activities she took an equal share, for she was essentially a home-maker.

But perhaps the thing that brought us most pleasure was his immense fund of stories which he used to deal out to us both for our enjoyment and for our instruction. For behind many of the jokes that he would tell us there often lay a subtle lesson so closely embedded in the story that it could not be forgotten. Sometimes the lesson would be apparent at once; at other times it would only burst upon us with its full meaning when the passing of the years and the new experiences into which we had entered made it both intelligible and valuable. The following story, which he must have told us scores of times,



Photo: J. Porter

HARRIET MARY PEAKE

and which, for some reason or other, was always regarded as the story *par excellence*, will serve as a good illustration of the latter case :

A certain lecturer, who was strongly in favour of alcoholic liquor, was once addressing a somewhat mixed audience. During the course of his lecture he made the statement that it was impossible to have anything stimulating without getting a certain amount of nourishment out of it. Immediately a voice from the back of the hall cried out: "Oh, yes you can! The other day a friend of mine was taking a walk in the country when he sat down on a wasps' nest. He found it very stimulating, but he didn't get much nourishment out of it."

In childhood it was the act of sitting down on the wasps' nest that constituted the funny part of the story. It was only later that we saw the grim, but humorous, contrast between what is stimulating and what is nourishing, and inevitably learned an important lesson with regard to Temperance propaganda.

Father was a great lover of fairy stories. Next to the detective story, I think, he liked the fairy story, and he certainly had no sympathy with those modern psychologists who would exclude it from the nursery. One of the things that he would instil into us again and again was the hope that we should never grow too old to appreciate a fairy tale, and one of the last things that he did before he was taken ill was to buy a fresh supply for his grandchildren. He also enjoyed books of travel partly because he liked stories of adventure, partly because he

wanted to be informed about the manners and customs of other people, and partly because he felt that information of this character would lead to a better understanding between different peoples. Hence we were always well stocked with books by such writers as Ballantyne, Kingston, Gilson, Strang and Stevenson.

In the September of 1912 we left Manchester in order to live at Freshfield, a village on the west coast lying between Southport and Liverpool. From some standpoints the eight years spent at Freshfield were very happy years. They brought a new lease of life for all except father. The years in Manchester had been marked by ever-increasing sickness where my brothers and I were concerned. Frequently it had been found necessary to spend a large part of the winter out of Manchester altogether. At last father's medical adviser told him that it would be necessary for us to clear out of the district if we were ever to be set on our feet. Both health and education were at a serious discount. The removal to Freshfield, the romance of the sea, the forming of new friendships, the privilege of living in a beautiful house with a beautiful garden, and, above all, the vast improvement in our health that followed upon these things and made their enjoyment possible, all helped to fill our cup of happiness to the brim.

But there can be no doubt that the removal to Freshfield had its darker side as well. It was hard upon father. For one thing it was very expensive. After the commencement of the War, when the great increase in prices took

place, the salaries of tutors and professors were not raised anything like as early as they ought to have been. This made it necessary for father to take on additional work in order to keep finances on a sound basis, and to give us the kind of preparation for life upon which he had set his heart. Indeed it is not too much to say that the removal to Freshfield involved him in a loss of thousands of pounds at a time when he could ill afford it. More serious still, the distance from Manchester reduced him to the position of a commercial traveller who could only be with his family during a crowded week-end, or in times of vacation which were often almost equally crowded. Though he owed much to the kindness of the Principals and the Matrons at Hartley College for their unstinting hospitality during this heavy period, the more intimate tie created by having him with us continually was inevitably broken.

The public, too, during those years was making ever greater demands upon his time and strength, and whenever he heard the call of duty he felt that he had no alternative but to respond. We realised that he was living for humanity. We could see, too, that he was making a great sacrifice on our behalf, and for this we shall always be grateful. It was a case of our health or his companionship, and he freely sacrificed the latter for the sake of the former. In spite of a serious breakdown in 1915, he managed to keep his colours flying for another five years.

In the early summer of 1920 we returned to Manchester, where the last nine years of

his life were spent. There is no need for me to dwell here upon the public events that crowded this part of his career as they have been recorded elsewhere in this volume. The amazing thing was that he knew so much about what was going on outside his own particular circle. Not infrequently during my historical studies, for instance, I discovered that he knew more about some of the books on my subject than the tutors who were specially in charge of me. His interests indeed were world wide, and nothing in the realm of scholarship was too insignificant to catch his eye. To the very end he kept the spirit of a child with a mind that was encyclopædic in its scope.

In the careers of his children he took a keen and active interest. There is little doubt that he would have liked us all to have followed in his steps, but he was both wise enough and generous enough to realise that Providence does not cast us all in the same mould. When our ideas ran contrary to his he always did his best to see our point of view, and in all his actions he made it a governing principle to treat us with absolute fairness. It could be said with perfect truth that he had no favourites. His readiness to help us in schemes and experiments that did not appeal to him at all may be illustrated from a couple of sentences from a letter that one of my brothers once wrote him: "Your letter put new life into me. I knew you would help me all you could."

The birth of his two grandchildren, Rosalind and Ruth, gave him particular pleasure, perhaps all the more so because his own family had consisted entirely of boys. In both cases he came to Middlesbrough to conduct the christening service. When he came to speak at the Middlesbrough Synod in 1927, he laughingly told some of the officials that it was his desire to see how the baby was getting on that had really brought him. It was another illustration of the old text, "And a little child shall lead them." One will always remember him crawling on the floor so that little Rosalind could the more easily pull his nose.

The end came sooner than any of us expected, though we had received several indications that his health was not all that could be desired. He was growing stouter than any of us liked to see. He had begun to form a more or less regular habit of dropping off to sleep in the middle of his studies. He was often attacked by an irritating cough which he experienced great difficulty in throwing off. He discovered that he could not walk so far or so quickly as had been his custom. Often when he was out he would pull himself up with a sudden jerk and say: "I can't go as fast as this." Since his death one has many times wondered whether the growing cysts were responsible for his action here. His blood pressure was frequently a long way below normal, with the result that his doctor compelled him to take things more

slowly. His memory occasionally betrayed him, and during the last eighteen months of his life my mother noticed that he did not crack his jokes over the table as he had been wont to do. She felt that a great change had come over him. The following extract, taken from a letter that he wrote me on September 20th, 1925, is typical of the feeling of intense strain under which he often worked during the last years of his life :

"The doctor is not satisfied with me. He says all the good I got from my holidays I have worked off already, and he thinks I cannot go through the winter (he means without a breakdown) unless I get some more holiday. I asked if week-ends would do ; he is dubious, but says they might be tried. I think public life for me is really over, as my other work is more than enough for my strength. At sixty we haven't the old resilience, and if we hit the floor we can't bounce up again as we could in the old days."

When the Presidency of the National Free Church Council was likely to come his way, I wrote him a very strong letter begging him not to consider it. It was not that I was in any way insensible of the honour that was being done to him, but that I was convinced that he had not sufficient strength at his time of life, and with all the other work that he had on hand, to cope with the additional duties that would be entailed by the holding of such an office. But he felt that he ought to accept the call, and for him that settled everything.

During his Presidential year the papers remarked more than once that he had a tired look about him, and when I read that he was using notes in the pulpit, and in one case at any rate speaking from a full manuscript—a thing that he had always abhorred—I felt instinctively that all was not well. Apart however, from a growing deafness, an inherited trouble, he showed no signs of an immediate collapse.

On July 18th, 1929, he returned from the meetings of the Society for Old Testament Study which had been held at Oxford. The following day he developed what appeared to be an attack of influenza. His temperature, however, remained obstinately high, though to begin with he suffered no pain. On July 27th, acute pain developed, and on the advice of Dr. Burgess, the newly-elected President of the British Medical Association, he was taken in an ambulance to the Manchester Royal Infirmary, where he was given a private ward. Three X-ray photographs failed to reveal fully the extent of the trouble. On August 6th a very serious operation for hydatid cysts was performed and blood transfusion became necessary. During the next thirteen days his life hung by a thread. He himself showed the greatest courage, and it was hoped against hope that his will power would pull him through. But it was not to be, and in the early morning of August 19th he passed to the higher life. His body was removed to the College Chapel where he had worshipped so often and

remained there during the service which throughout struck the note of Christian triumph growing in dignity and power till it reached its climax in the closing hymn :

“ From earth’s wide bounds, from ocean’s farthest coast,
Through gates of pearl streams in the countless host,
Singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost :
Hallelujah ! ”

Looking back over the years perhaps the first thing that strikes one about father was his remarkable industry. He was generally in his study by nine o’clock in the morning and he rarely went to bed before twelve o’clock at night. In term time he would deliver as many as twenty-one lectures a week in addition to his other work. During his vacation he would often work for fifteen hours a day with no relaxation save when the gong summoned him to his meals. One of his favourite stories was that of the American editor who wrote one article with his right hand, another article with his left hand, dictated a third article to his secretary, and then in order that no part of him might remain inactive, rocked the cradle with his feet. Another story that he liked was that of the coachman who took a peculiar pleasure in driving his conveyance two inches from the edge of the precipice. He used it as a simile to illustrate the fact that he ought to labour to the last ounce of his strength, and one reason why he kept continually under the doctor was so that he could work as near to the edge of the cliff as possible

without actually going over. His ability to concentrate, however, was not inherited but acquired. Confessions of laziness are of frequent occurrence in his early correspondence. In a letter to my mother, for instance, written in September, 1890, he says:

"I am indolent by nature, and only the knowledge that I had just myself to look to for success in life has been strong enough to give me the necessary courage to put my nose to the grindstone."

His tireless industry was aided by an excellent memory, though he himself was often troubled that he did not possess such a good one as that of Robertson Nicoll. When he was a graduate at Oxford he attended a course of lectures by Professor Loissett for the purpose of improving it. Later he took up Pelmanism partly as an encouragement to his children to do the same, and partly in the hope that he might discover some further tips that would be of use to him in his work. His library contained several books describing the best ways in which items of importance could be retained. But in reality his memory was excellent. At Church he rarely found it necessary to consult a hymn-book. If he read a poem that captured his interest like Browning's "Johannes Agricola in Meditation" it was only necessary for him to read it through carefully two or three times to know it and to be able to recall it at will. Even the authorities at the Pelman Institute confessed that his papers were so good that they could not do

much to help him. Here he was assisted further by what he himself called a "drop-shutter" mind. By this he meant that he could pass with ease from one subject to another, and however interested he had been in his previous study there would never be any fear that it would intrude into his new line of thought. This saved him from much unnecessary worry. He not only possessed a good memory; what was at times even more important, he possessed a good "forgettory."

During his earlier years father did indulge in a little recreation. He was a keen player at chess, which he regarded as the queen of games, and at which he generally succeeded in beating his opponent. He was fond of cycling, and before his operation, which took place in the latter part of 1902, and which debarred him from nearly all physical exercise, devoted many of his holidays to cycling tours in North Wales, the Lake District, and elsewhere. He made heroic attempts to win his laurels at skating, at which his wife was very efficient, but here he never seems to have got beyond the stage which he himself describes as "highly ungraceful." He has preserved an account of how he once bathed in the river along with four other men at Clifton Hampden about thirteen miles from Oxford, on a day when, to quote his own words, "the water was warmer than the air." His colleagues often tried to persuade him to learn golf, but he would laughingly reply that while it might enlarge his vocabulary he was sceptical of

any other good that it might do him. His main recreation was walking, and this he always enjoyed if he was in congenial company and the distance was not too far. Here, in his early years the beautiful hills of Shropshire afforded ample opportunity for this form of exercise, and there can be little doubt that his numerous tramps across the country in the healthy and invigorating climate of this wonderful district did much to overcome the weakness that had marked his childhood. His affection for the Shropshire hills was one of the most touching elements in his character. He would never pass them in the train without calling for silence from his children during which he would point the hills out one by one concluding with the remark, "I knew what beautiful scenery was when I was a boy." It almost seemed as though each rock and stone had been graven upon his memory. He felt that he was in touch with the elemental forces of Nature through whose healing ministry he had been endowed with sufficient strength to accomplish his lifework. In a letter to my mother, written in the early autumn of 1890, he gives us a brief description of one of his many rambles :

"William and I went for a walk up the Ashes Valley this morning. It lies between two of the Stretton hills of the Long Mynd Range, a romantic spot with a brook flowing down it. We came to a little bit of a water-fall, but that scarcely gives a right impression, as the water does not fall sheer, but down the

stones. We amused ourselves putting stones across it half way down so as to catch the water and throw it up and over like an open fan formed of a thin sheet of water. This looked very pretty. And so we left it. William having got his feet wet, and I, I daresay, with my cold none the better for it."

One of his favourite pastimes as a boy consisted in skimming pebbles across a lake or river and counting the number of times the stone bounded from the surface.

Father was a non-smoker and a staunch teetotaller all his life. In the Spring of 1886 he became what was known as a Temperance orator, and began to address the Blue Ribbon Meetings in the neighbourhood of Presteign. For many years he was a Vice-President of the Manchester, Salford and District Temperance Union, and a generous subscriber to its funds. For a long period, too, he was a Vice-President of the Lancashire and Cheshire Band of Hope and Temperance Union, and at difficult stages in its history he again and again came forward to encourage the members and officials with his counsel and his speech. He strongly agreed with Lloyd George when he said that England had three enemies to fight; Germany, Austria, and Alcohol, but that the greatest of these was Alcohol. He had the greatest admiration for the magnificent stand taken by the Wesleyan Church on this question, and on more than one occasion said that this denomination had set an example that others might copy with profit. There

were few causes that he had more warmly at heart than that of a dry England, and in a sermon which he preached at the Albert Hall, Manchester, when President of the National Free Church Council, he made four statements that were typical of his teaching on this question :

“The trouble with alcohol is that it is so stealthy, so insidious in its character, that it passes into a man’s life, and long before he is aware of what is happening, while he still thinks the danger is far in the future, he has got so entangled in the toils of the accursed thing that he suddenly wakes up to the fact that he cannot in his own strength break away from it. Gradually he finds that he has to be stimulated by increased doses until that which he would have shrunk from taking in earlier days comes to him to be quite a natural and obvious amount to take. That is one of the great difficulties.”

“In my earlier years I have frequently been thrown into company where I should be, perhaps, the only teetotaler : often with men of very brilliant intellect, and some of them famous. I am quite prepared to say from experience that if I want a company where talk is brilliant, where capital stories are told, where there is a constant flow of merriment and good humour, I know of none equal to a company of ministers. That I say quite deliberately. I am a layman myself, but I have been in the company of ministers over and over again, and I have heard remarks quite as brilliant,

quite as humorous, even higher than any I have heard when alcohol was freely flowing all the time."

"All social workers in destitute areas know how they are almost brought to a standstill in the wonderful work which they are trying to do. I have heard social workers down in dark areas speak with passion of the way in which at every turn the beneficent ministries they have exercised are being held up and hampered by this thing."

"It is no use saying my influence does not count. We all count for something, and our influence is a thing of which we shall have to give account at last at the judgment seat of Christ. This is a question we all have to face. I decided it long ago for myself. I had no hesitation whatever in deciding that every atom of influence I had should be thrown on the side of Temperance. To me every man's duty to become a teetotaler was absolutely clear. I do not judge others who take a different view. But I do beg of them to ask whether they may not be using their influence in a way for which they may blush when they stand before the judgment seat of Christ."

Father was keenly interested in all social and political questions, his favourite paper being *The Manchester Guardian*. He gave valuable help to those who were working in connexion with the housing problem. He was a member of Copec, and of the Continuation Committee that met at Manchester. He reviewed a number of books on Bolshevism

in which he attempted to set the Bolshevik in a truer light. He hit out vigorously against the cruelties perpetrated on the negroes in the Southern States of America in his review of Stephen Graham's book *Children of the Slaves* :

"We entirely agree with the author that the worst of all sins is cruelty. To take pleasure in inflicting atrocious pain points to a depth of depravity which we associate with devils. It is not so much that the mob kills without trial negroes who are by no means guilty of the alleged offence, bad though that is, but that drunk with cruelty they do their victim to death by lingering and atrocious pain, watch the extreme agonies with amusement and pleasure, and take delight in the heart-rending cries for mercy addressed to hearts steeled against compassion by racial antipathy. The tormentors glory in their deeds and it is not uncommon for the lynching crowd to pose for the photographer. The narratives here recorded are horrible. In the case of one, where the cruelty was of a particularly shocking kind and perpetrated on an innocent woman, the author is not able to complete the story ; it is too bad for print. We should be glad to think that the United States will take her place in the moral leadership of the world ; but with what effective voice can she speak on Ireland or on Russia while the smoke of negro burnings goes up to God and the innocent blood of her victims cries to Him from the ground ?"—*The Holborn Review*, April, 1921.

Father experienced a special pleasure in entertaining foreign missionaries when they came home on furlough, and always took a leading part at the Missionary Anniversary held by the students at Hartley College. When he was about five years old he expressed the desire to become a missionary, and his mother asked him what he would do if he found himself in a foreign land with no food. "Mother," he answered, "have you forgotten the promise, 'Your bread shall be given you, and your *butter* shall be sure?'" Even at that early age he had begun to emend the text of the Old Testament. Though he never realised this early ambition, partly on account of his health, and partly because the call came to him to work in another direction, his affection for the cause never waned. Every missionary serving abroad knew that in him they had a staunch and sympathetic friend.

Father collected the standard works on Spiritualism by writers like Myers, Crookes, Podmore, Barrett, and read with interest the numerous books that came in for review at the close of the War. He was convinced that the subject could not be dismissed in a few sentences, and strongly objected to preachers dealing with it unless they had made a very thorough study of their material. He was also convinced that those who embarked on this mysterious quest ought to be acquainted with the perils that confronted them. There was the hideous fact that many had lost their reason through dabbling in the black art,

and while demon possession might be no more than a fable, none could deny the grim fact of insanity. At the same time he did not see eye to eye with writers like Clodd and McCabe who were inclined to attribute all the manifestations of the spirits to fraud or trickery. He maintained that the subject ought to be left to scientific research at the hands of the trained expert. He believed intensely in the great cloud of witnesses, but felt that if communication was ever to be established with them it was for the expert to determine the method.

It now remains to give a brief description of some of father's more personal characteristics.

One of the traits that impressed his colleagues most was his humility. Again and again this is referred to in private correspondence and in published article. Hardly anyone seems to write about him without drawing attention to it. "With a truly Himalayan range of learning and with marvellous powers of exposition, he had the simplicity and the naiveté of a little child," says the Editor of *The Congregational Quarterly*. "He was indeed a wonderful and beautiful character, wonderful in the range and depth of his learning and beautiful in the splendid humility and simplicity with which he carried it all off," writes the Dean of Manchester. "Wasn't it wonderful, mother, that Dr. Peake would drive along with a Tommy in dirty clothes like mine?" is the question of one who once

rode with him in an open landau to a rather fashionable Church. "It is well-nigh impossible for some of us to imagine a world or face it," writes the Rev. H. J. Pickett in *The Methodist Leader*, "without the sunshine and strength of Dr. Peake's commanding personality. Not that he was obtrusive. He was, in fact, the reverse of that. Indeed, it was the lack of it that won you. For it allowed his real greatness to shine through, enabling you to see in him the gentleness that makes men truly great, the humility whose certain reward is exaltation." Father's humility, however, was in no sense mock modesty and never prevented him from rejoicing in his successes, as when he was told by a friend that his Commentary had been quoted in the theological lectures of a Greek archimandrite or recommended for use by the Natal Education Department.

Closely allied with this was his love for simplicity. He received more help from a sermon that was homely and direct than he did from a discourse that was learned and abstract. He did not care for anthems, introits, liturgies, the singing of the Lord's Prayer, or indeed any innovation that seemed to detract from the simplicity of worship. He liked the old classic hymns like "Rock of Ages," and "Jesu Lover of My Soul," set to their old familiar tunes. The same love for simplicity was also revealed in his dress, diet, furniture, recreations, and indeed in his general attitude to life.

Not far removed from his desire for simplicity was his sense of reverence. He admired a rigid sense of duty and awe in the presence of God, and thought it a tragedy that we had so largely lost this element in our religious life. He believed that Jesus would never have considered it safe to say "Our Father" had he not added the words "Hallowed Be Thy Name." When we lose from our religion the sense of the infinite distance that separates the eternal God from the highest of His creatures we lose that antiseptic element in our religion that saves it from lapsing into a corrupt sentimentalism. The respect that he commanded from others was to a great extent due to the possession of this conviction. In his presence they found it impossible to tell a story that could be questioned. His early correspondence reveals that during the days of adolescence and early manhood temptation to evil was a potent factor in his life. In his letters to his friend, Willie Meredith, he confesses how hard the struggle often is. But his life was to a remarkable degree hid with Christ in God and through the medium of that spiritual union with Christ to which he so often referred in his sermons and in his writings he proved again and again the truth of the old text, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

"There was that in him which prevented persons from taking liberties with him, and that

which drew men to him in unlimited confidences. His shutters were always up and closed but his door was always open. He had his secret places, and any violation of their privacy he resented, but he was open-minded and open-hearted to his friends and those who needed his help."—Rev. James Lockhart. *The Methodist Leader*.

His reverence, however, did not in any way interfere with his sense of humour. He disliked practical joking which he regarded as a debased form of humour, pointing to an intellect that had not risen above the elementary stages in the evolution of laughter. He was very quick at repartee. An undergraduate who was looking forward to his examination with alarm once said to him, "I think I shall go into the army if I get ploughed in Mods. Do you think it is a good thing to go into action with Dutch courage?" To this father replied, "Well, if you get ploughed in Mods, you will be able to go into action with the Oxford pluck." He always had an unfailing fund of good stories and was never at a loss for the right one. His letters, too, often scintillated with merriment as in the one that he wrote to his sister-in-law, Mrs. William Peake, a Christian Scientist.

May 9th, 1923.

"MY DEAR CHLOE,

You will remember that the author of the seventy-third Psalm says,

‘But as for me, my feet were almost gone,
My steps had well-nigh slipped.’

The Psalmist was more fortunate than I was, for with me a fortnight last Thursday morning it was not a case of ‘almost’ and ‘well-nigh’ but of ‘altogether’ and ‘completely.’ On the mental delusion known as a pavement outside the hallucination of mortal mind called St. Pancras station, the dark projection of my imagination known as my body experienced the error that it was pitching forward, the result being a bad strain in that materialisation of my consciousness known as my right leg. I imagined myself several times during the day to be careering through space in what I believe deluded mortals call a taxi, and in the corrupt imaginations of my heart I have seemed to myself to have been limping badly. I am thankful to say that the mists of error seem to be thinning; as the ordinary victim of illusion would say, the leg is much better. I noticed your emphatic approval when Dr. Hutton said that some people didn’t require coddling, they wanted shaking; and you will be delighted to know that I got a very severe shaking when I tripped into that error, and it took me some time to regain my mental equilibrium.

With our best love to all,

Yours affectionately,

ARTHUR S. PEAKE,”

Father was exceptionally loyal in his friendships. It was possible to tell him the most intimate secrets and be certain that they would never be revealed. He was the safest man I ever knew. This was all the more remarkable when one remembers his powers as a conversationalist. Time, too, did not wither the staunchness of his loyalty, as a multitude could testify. His secretary, Miss Elsie Cann, who worked with him for nearly twenty-five years, describes him as "the most patient as well as the most kind-hearted and self-sacrificing man I have ever met." The Rev. J. Harryman Taylor, in a letter to my mother, refers to a friendship with him that had lasted for forty years and which time had in no way spoiled. Mr. A. V. Murray was not only speaking for himself when he said:

"He saw me through Oxford. I had no resources but his on which to draw, and he let me draw upon them without stint. I had no claim on him whatever, yet he always acted as if I had. He treated me like a father, encouraged me in reading, helped me out of difficulties, invited me to his house, introduced me to interesting people. Through him I got to know Deissmann in Berlin and Sanday in Oxford, and was associated with Mansfield from my very first term. In all this I was simply a raw undergraduate, just like hundreds of others, and yet having all these opportunities because I had him, and he created them for me."—*The Methodist Leader*, Sept. 5th, 1929.

Father seldom refused a case of need, and was more generous than even his most intimate friends were aware.

If one asks for the secret of his life one has not far to travel. It is to be found in his Pauline doctrine of the Christian's mystical union with Christ. It was this that gave such quiet confidence to his prayers, that made him so very sure of God, and that became the firm foundation on which his faith in immortality rested. He knew that the doctrine was true because he had verified it in experience. Indeed it became the main-spring of all his Christian activities and of the delight that he took in feeling that he was of use to others. He hoped that after his death he would be remembered not as a student of Biblical Criticism but as an interpreter of the great personalities of Scripture and their contributions to religious thought. In Criticism taken by itself he had only a lukewarm interest: it was the assured results of Criticism bringing help and healing to humanity that meant so much to him.

When Miss Gotch, the organising secretary for the Women's Council in connection with the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches, made her annual report at Bridlington in 1928 she likened some of the Free Church officers to the characters drawn by Bunyan. Afterwards, father said to her, "Of all Bunyan's characters I should like best to have the name of Help."

It is by that name that he will be remembered.

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